MARVEL
VENOM
THE LAND WHERE KILLERS DWELL
BUNN • CHECCHETTO • LARRAZ • JACINTO • COELHO

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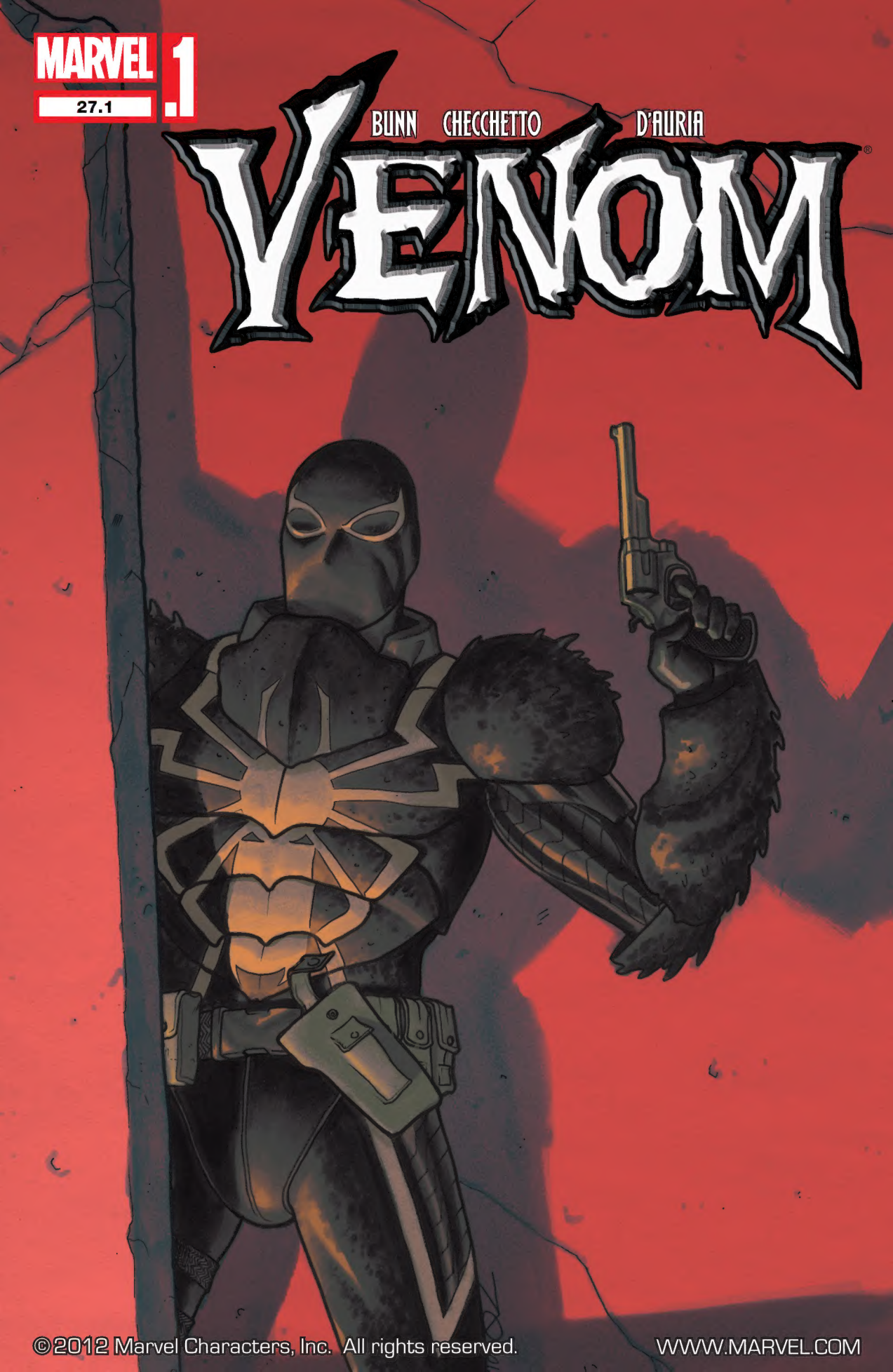

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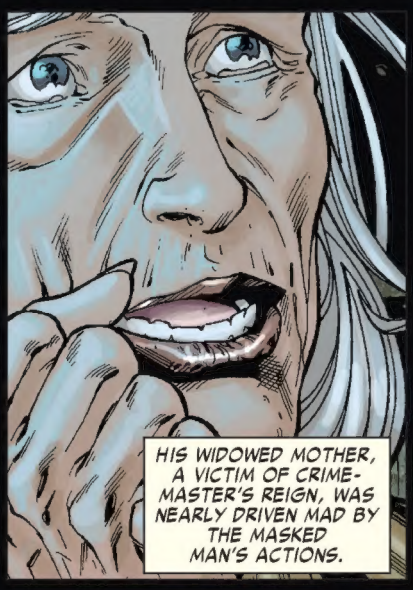
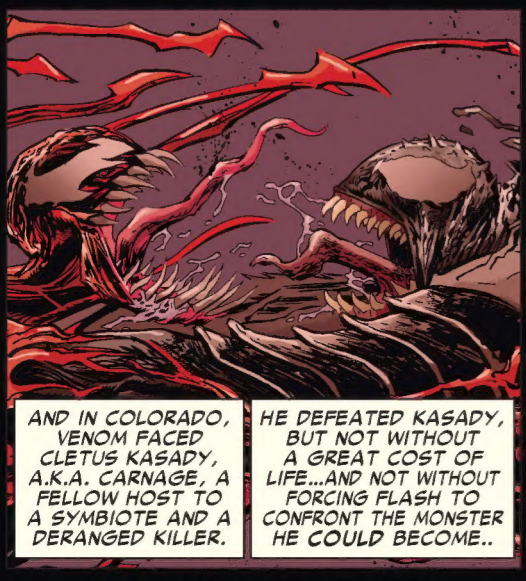
Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM

PREVIOUSLY...




AND IN COLORADO, VENOM FACED CLETUS KASADY, A.K.A. CARNAGE, A FELLOW HOST TO A SYMBIOTE AND A DERANGED KILLER.
HE DEFEATED KASADY, BUT NOT WITHOUT A GREAT COST OF LIFE...AND NOT WITHOUT FORCING FLASH TO CONFRONT THE MONSTER HE COULD BECOME..

THE EVIL INSIDE US ALL...

CULLEN BUNN
writer

MARCO CHECCHETTO
art

FABIO D'AURIA
color art

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

JOE QUINONES
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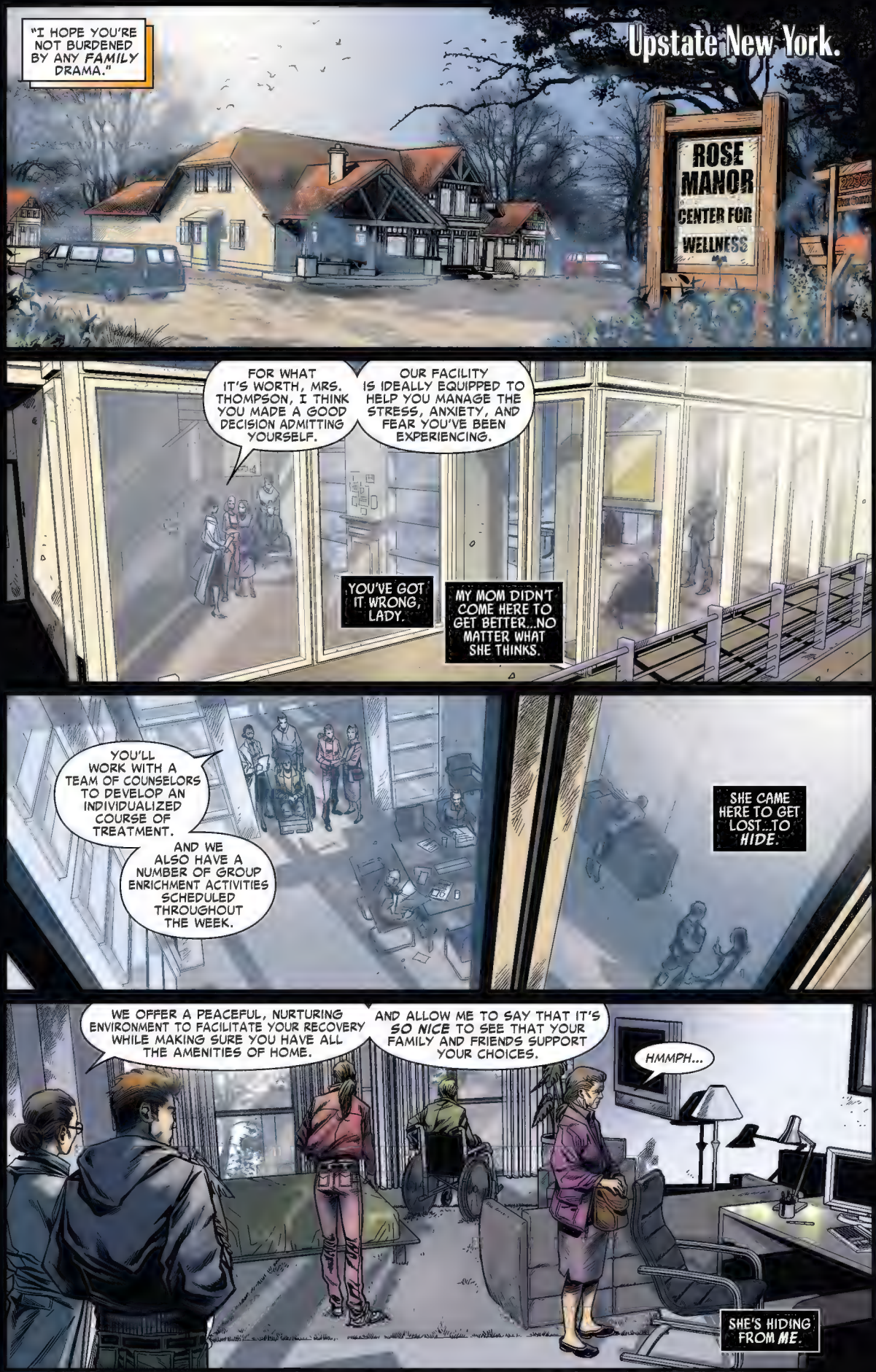
Athol, Massachusetts.
HERE'S MY OFFER... TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT...
YOU GUYS TELL ME WHAT I WANT TO KNOW, AND I'LL STOP PUNCHING YOU.
IN TEN TO TWENTY YEARS, YOUR WHOLE GANG WILL BE OUT OF PRISON...
...AND YOU CAN GO BACK TO LOWERING THE I.Q. OF MOSH PITS, BREWING MOONSHINE, AND...I DUNNO...DATING YOUR SIBLINGS.
SOUND FAIR?
ICE THIS FREAK!
GUESS NOT.
MY NAME IS EUGENE "FLASH" THOMPSON.

ONCE UPON A TIME... I THOUGHT DEVIL-WORSHIPPING CULTS WERE JUST THE STUFF OF GHOST STORIES.
SOMETHING TO SCARE THE GIRLS...TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO SNUGGLE UP CLOSE ON CHILLY NIGHTS.
BLAM! B-BLAM! BLAM!
THESE DAYS, I'M A SOLDIER, A SECRET AGENT, AND WEAR A SHAPE-SHIFTING ALIEN SUIT THAT HELPS ME DO THIS.
AND SECTS LIKE THE HARKSPUR BROOD ARE ALL TOO REAL...AND ALL TOO COMMON.
BLAM! B-BLAM! BLAM!
MY "SUIT" OF ALIEN FLESH COMES FULLY LOADED WITH A WIDE ASSORTMENT OF EXTRA-HUMAN ABILITIES.
THE SYMBIOTE AND ME... TOGETHER... WE'RE CALLED VENOM.
AAAGH!
P-PLEASE... AGH...I DON'T... I DON'T KNOW...
ONE OF YOU REDNECK FREAKS BETTER START TALKING... FAST...OR I'LL...
REEEAAAGGGHHH!
SHHR-KRACK!

USING NON-LETHAL AMMUNITION.
RUBBER BULLETS.
THE FINEST URBAN PACIFICATION MONEY CAN BUY.
BLAM! BLAM! B-BLAM!
I CAN'T INTERROGATE THEM IF THEY'RE DEAD.
IF I KILL THEM...
...THEY WON'T FEEL A THING.
PROBLEM IS...EVEN THOUGH I'M ASKING... I DON'T WANT TO HEAR WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY...DON'T WANT TO STOP HITTING THEM.
THEY'RE BAD PEOPLE. THEY DESERVE THIS BEATING.
I...I'LL COOPERATE! I SWEAR!
TOO LATE.
WHEN THEY WAKE UP IN A COLD SWEAT IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT, I WANT IT TO BE MY FACE THAT HAUNTS THEM.
HRRK!
CHUNK!
"AGENT VENOM... WHAT'S WRONG?
"YOU SEEM POSITIVELY ON EDGE."

The Raft.
Maximum Security Prison.
"DID THE HARKSPUR BROOD SCURRY OFF INTO ANOTHER ONE OF THEIR HIDEY HOLES?
"I WARNED YOU THEY WERE A SLIPPERY BUNCH."
I FOUND THEM, HELLSTROM, JUST LIKE YOU SAID.
EXCELLENT. MY REPUTATION AS AN INFORMANT REMAINS INTACT.
CAN'T SAY THEY WERE HELPFUL.
THEY DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT...UH... UNDERWORLD PERSONNEL CHANGES.
AND WHEN I SAY "UNDERWORLD," I MEAN IN THE BIBLICAL SENSE.
THE DESCENT. A BUNCH OF--GET THIS--DEMONS AND DEVILS SELECTING SUCCESSORS TO TAKE THEIR PLACE.
I'M ON THE NOMINATION BLOCK, ALONG WITH DAIMON HELLSTROM AND WHO KNOWS HOW MANY OTHERS.
WHY DO I FEEL LIKE YOU'RE STILL PLAYING GAMES WITH ME?
NO GAMES.
IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT THEY WERE IN THE DARK.
NOT EVERY D.O.A. CELL IS PRIVY TO THOSE DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS.
HELLSTROM BETRAYED EVERYTHING HE STOOD FOR TO MAKE SURE HE'S CHOSEN INSTEAD OF SOMEONE REALLY...AWFUL.
LESSER OF TWO EVILS...CHANGE THE SYSTEM FROM THE INSIDE... OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
...OR MAYBE HE'S JUST AN @#$%.
LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE. YOU APPREHENDED A GROUP OF DANGEROUS CRIMINALS...
...AND A FEW MORE PAWNS ARE OFF THE BOARD.

STOP SMILING!
AFTER WHAT YOU DID...
TRYING TO POSSESS ME... PUTTING A DEMON INSIDE ME...
YOU DON'T GET TO TREAT ME LIKE SOME CLUELESS ERRAND BOY!
SHH-WHAM!
YOU'LL FIND THAT PLAYING THE MARTYR ONLY EVER REALLY WORKED FOR ONE PERSON IN ALL OF HISTORY.
I'M SURE YOU USED ALL YOUR VERY BEST CHARACTER TRAITS TO PERSUADE THOSE HARKSPUR CURS TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.
THOSE SAME TACTICS, THOUGH, DON'T RATTLE ME.
WE NEED EACH OTHER, YOU AND I. SO WE SHOULD AT LEAST BE CIVIL.
ALAS! IT APPEARS TODAY'S VISIT WILL BE CUT SHORT.
AGENT VENOM! STEP AWAY FROM THE GLASS!
I WORRY ABOUT YOU, AGENT VENOM. I REALLY DO.
YOU SEEM DISTRACTED... RESTLESS... AGITATED.
IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT AT HOME?


"I HOPE YOU'RE NOT BURDENED BY ANY FAMILY DRAMA."
Upstate New York.
ROSE MANOR CENTER FOR WELLNESS
FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, MRS. THOMPSON, I THINK YOU MADE A GOOD DECISION ADMITTING YOURSELF.
OUR FACILITY IS IDEALLY EQUIPPED TO HELP YOU MANAGE THE STRESS, ANXIETY, AND FEAR YOU'VE BEEN EXPERIENCING.
YOU'VE GOT IT WRONG, LADY.
MY MOM DIDN'T COME HERE TO GET BETTER...NO MATTER WHAT SHE THINKS.
YOU'LL WORK WITH A TEAM OF COUNSELORS TO DEVELOP AN INDIVIDUALIZED COURSE OF TREATMENT.
AND WE ALSO HAVE A NUMBER OF GROUP ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.
SHE CAME HERE TO GET LOST...TO HIDE.
WE OFFER A PEACEFUL, NURTURING ENVIRONMENT TO FACILITATE YOUR RECOVERY WHILE MAKING SURE YOU HAVE ALL THE AMENITIES OF HOME.
AND ALLOW ME TO SAY THAT IT'S SO NICE TO SEE THAT YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS SUPPORT YOUR CHOICES.
HMMPH...
SHE'S HIDING FROM ME.

FROM VENOM.
THANKS FOR COMING ALONG, PETE. I KNOW IT'S A PAIN, BUT IT MEANS A LOT.
IT'S FUNNY, Y'KNOW?
FOR SO LONG, I THOUGHT I'D BE THE ONE WHO'D END UP IN REHAB. I NEVER EXPECTED MY MOM...
WITH ALL SHE'S BEEN THROUGH...LOSING YOUR DAD...THE RECENT ATTACKS...IT'S NO WONDER SHE WANTS TO LEVEL OUT.
PEOPLE BOUNCE BACK FROM THIS SORT OF THING.
SHE'LL BOUNCE BACK.
SPEAKING OF...
...UH...
I HEARD FROM SOMEONE FROM THE...UH...I GUESS FROM THE GOOD OLD DAYS.
A.J. PATTON.
A.J.?
HE JUST MOVED BACK TO THE CITY.
I WASN'T SURE IF I SHOULD TELL YOU OR NOT. YOU KNOW, WITH ALL THAT'S GOING ON.
BUT HE MENTIONED YOU... SAID YOU SHOULD GET IN TOUCH...IF YOU WANTED.

New York, New York.
CAN'T BLAME MOM FOR NEEDING SOME...TIME...TO COLLECT HERSELF.
WHEN CRIME-MASTER AND HIS SAVAGE SIX CAME AFTER ME, SHE SAW VENOM AT HIS CRUELEST.*
SCARED...CONFUSED ...ANGRY...I LET THE MONSTER OFF THE CHAIN...RIGHT IN FRONT OF HER.
NOW...LIKE THE "BAD PEOPLE" WITH THEIR BRUISES AND BROKEN BONES...SHE SEES VENOM'S FACE WHENEVER SHE'S AFRAID.
*SEE VENOM ISSUES #17-22 --TOM.
BEING HAUNTED LIKE THAT... HAUNTED BY THE MONSTER...DROVE HER TO ROSE MANOR.
BUT A.J. PATTON...
IT WOULDN'T SURPRISE ME IF IT WAS FLASH THOMPSON'S FACE THAT GAVE HIM NIGHTMARES.
I DIDN'T CARE THAT A.J. WAS GAY. HELL...BACK THEN, I'M NOT EVEN SURE I FULLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT THAT EVEN MEANT.
I ONLY CARED THAT I WAS ANGRY.
ALWAYS ANGRY.

AND HE WAS DIFFERENT.
OUT OF MY WAY, FRUITLOOP!
UNNF!
SLAM!
BEING DISSIMILAR...BEING MISUNDERSTOOD...BEING SMALLER THAN ME...WAS ALL IT TOOK.
AAAAUGH!
KRK
FLASH... I THINK HE'S HAD...
THAT'S ENOUGH, MAN!
...
A.J. NEVER TOLD ANYONE WHAT I HAD DONE TO HIM.
AND HE GRADUATED WITH HIS ARM IN A SLING.
BECAUSE I WAS ANGRY.
AJ 5917

Brooklyn Heights.
"I'M GLAD YOU CALLED, FLASH."
EXCUSE THE MESS. UNPACKING SEEMS TO BE TAKING FOREVER.
AND SORRY ABOUT THE BUMPY RIDE UP THE STEPS.
I'M USED TO THOSE BUMPY RIDES BY NOW.
BESIDES... I WAS HALFWAY EXPECTING YOU TO ROLL ME STRAIGHT INTO THE STREET.
ATTIC
STUDY
AFTER THE WAY I...
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS.
FLASH THOMPSON, THIS IS MY HUSBAND, DAN.
GOOD TO MEET YOU.
I'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU.
YEAH.
I CAN'T IMAGINE YOU'VE HEARD ANYTHING I'M PROUD OF.

WHAT? YOU DON'T THINK I RECOUNT TALES OF ALL YOUR GAME-WINNING TOUCHDOWNS?
DAN...MAYBE YOU COULD GET OUR GUEST A DRINK?
WHAT DO YOU SAY, FLASH? SODA? BEER?
WATER WOULD BE FINE.
SO, A.J... LOOK...
...I WAS SURPRISED WHEN PETE GAVE ME YOUR NUMBER AND ALL.
LIKE I WAS SAYING, AFTER THE WAY I TREATED YOU IN HIGH SCHOOL, I JUST FEEL LIKE I--
WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE, FLASH.
REALLY.
I'LL ADMIT... SOME OF THOSE DAYS WERE REALLY TOUGH.
BUT I GOT PAST IT. I'M NOT *SCARRED*. I'M NOT *WOUNDED*.
I'M ACTUALLY DOING *REALLY* WELL.
DAN'S GREAT. THE APARTMENT IS AN OLD FIXER-UPPER, BUT I LOVE IT. AND I'VE GOT A TERRIFIC JOB.
I WORK WITH SCHOOL BOARDS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, CONSULTING WITH PARENTS OF TROUBLED KIDS, WORKING WITH YOUTH GROUPS.
I'M *HAPPY*.
HAPPY, HUH?
THAT'S... *SOMETHING*... THAT'S REALLY GREAT TO HEAR.

WHAT ABOUT YOU? WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO?
YOU'RE PRETTY MUCH LOOKING AT IT.
WAS IN THE ARMY FOR A WHILE. YOU PROBABLY KNEW ABOUT THAT. DIDN'T MAKE A CAREER OF IT FOR OBVIOUS REASONS.
WAS WORKING WITH THE V.A. FOR A BIT, BUT I GUESS THAT DRIED UP.
IT'S STRANGE HOW THINGS CHANGE, ISN'T IT?
MAN... YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT.
HEY, A.J.? GIVE ME A HAND IN HERE?
SORRY. EXCUSE ME.
LIKE I SAID, THE PLACE IS A MESS.
HE PROBABLY CAN'T FIND THE FAUCET OR SOMETHING.
HEY...

I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE DOING ALL RIGHT WITH THIS.
I'M *FINE*, REALLY.
WELL, DON'T THINK I HAVEN'T NOTICED THAT YOU DIDN'T LET HIM *APOLOGIZE* FOR THE WAY HE TREATED YOU.
MAYBE HE DOESN'T KNOW YOU STILL WAKE UP EVERY NOW AND THEN FROM NIGHTMARES OF HIM BEATING YOU.
MAYBE HE DOESN'T KNOW YOUR ARM STILL GIVES YOU TROUBLE TO THIS DAY.
BUT I DO. AND I'M STILL NOT SURE WHY YOU INVITED THAT *MONSTER* INTO OUR HOUSE.
DOES HE LOOK LIKE A MONSTER TO YOU?
BECAUSE... WHEN I LOOK AT HIM, I JUST FEEL...*PITY*.
WHEN I LOOK AT HIM NOW...
...ALL I SEE IS A BROKEN-DOWN *WASH-OUT*.
THEY'RE WHISPERING... AND I APPRECIATE IT... BUT THE PLACE ISN'T THAT BIG, SOUND CARRIES...
STUDY
ATTIC
...AND I'M SITTING RIGHT HERE.

RIGHT HERE.
YES.
THE SUIT.
I NEED IT.

North Central Correctional Institute.
Gardner, Massachusetts.
WAKEY WAKEY.
HNNH?
INFIRMARY CAM
REC
2:45:35 AM
INFIRMARY CAM
REC
2:45:37 AM

YOU DIDN'T THINK YOU'D SEEN THE LAST OF ME, DID YOU?
NO, NO, NO...
WE PLAYED A LITTLE BIT... BUT NOW I'M BACK FOR MORE.
BACK TO FINISH WHAT I STARTED.
I...I ALREADY TOLD YOU.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT--
MMMMPH!
AH AH AH...
WHEN I WANT TO HEAR YOUR TONGUE WAGGING, I'LL RIP IT OUT AND STITCH IT TO A DOG'S TAIL.
SPLK!

WAA-SMASH!
WHHUFF!
KRAM!
GOOD TALK.
I'M GONNA LET THAT SINK IN.
I'M GONNA LET YOU HEAL UP.
AND THEN ONE DAY...WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT...
...I'LL COME BACK TO PLAY.

ROSE MANOR CENTER FOR WELLNESS
PLEASE...
...PLEASE...
SKRTCH! SKRRRRRTCH! SKRRRRRTCH!
...GO AWAY.
SKRRRRRTCH! SKRRRRRTCH!
AWWW... YOU DON'T WANT ME TO COME INSIDE?
TO TUCK YOU IN?
SLLLLGGGKK
DON'T MIND ME, THEN.
I'LL JUST STAY HERE FOR A LITTLE WHILE AND WATCH YOU.
I'LL WATCH YOU SLEEPING.
PLEASE. GO AWAY.

The Next Day...
NO OFFENSE, FLASH, BUT YOU LOOK LIKE HELL. ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP?
I DUNNO, PETE.
I CRASHED EARLY LAST NIGHT, BUT I FEEL LIKE I DIDN'T SLEEP A WINK.
NO REST FOR THE WICKED, I GUESS.
LISTEN, PETE. MEETING WITH A.J. THE OTHER DAY GOT ME THINKING.
WELL, I DON'T SAY IT OFTEN ENOUGH, BUT I'M PROUD OF YOU.
YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND, AND I'M--
CAREFUL, ALL-STAR. YOU'RE STARTING TO SOUND LIKE AUNT MAY.
ALL I'M SAYING IS...YOU'RE OUT THERE EVERY DAY, BEING BRILLIANT.
YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY FROM THAT PUNY LITTLE WIMP BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL.
YOU'RE A REAL SUCCESS STORY.
YOU KNOW COMPLIMENTS MAKE ME UNEASY, RIGHT?
WHAT I KNOW IS I WAS A REAL JACKASS TO YOU IN SCHOOL.
I'M SORRY FOR THE WAY I PICKED ON YOU.
BUT YOU TURNED OUT ALL RIGHT.
I MEAN, IT WASN'T SO BAD, RIGHT? I DIDN'T MESS YOU UP FOR LIFE OR ANYTHING.
...
FLASH.
I'M...I'M JUST GONNA COME OUT AND SAY THIS, I GUESS.
YOU WERE AWFUL.
THERE WERE DAYS I WANTED TO FAKE BEING SICK JUST SO I DIDN'T HAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL.
AND I LOVED SCHOOL.
I JUST...I JUST COULDN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT OF WALKING THROUGH THOSE DOORS AND FACING...
...YOU.

THERE WERE WEEKS ON END WHEN I DIDN'T GO TO THE RESTROOM BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID I'D FIND YOU WAITING FOR ME IN THERE.
I ATE LUNCH ALONE... HIDING IN A CLASSROOM...BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT YOU PICKING ON ME IN THE CAFETERIA.
BUT...I GUESS...
I GUESS I JUST FIGURED OUT HOW TO GET *PAST* IT ALL.
I *MOVED ON.*
MOVE ON.
WITH ALL THAT'S BEEN HAPPENING...WITH MY MOM...WITH BETTY...I THINK I NEED A CHANGE OF SCENERY.
I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'M GONNA GO YET. *ANYWHERE*, I GUESS.
BUT I'M *LEAVING* NEW YORK, PETE.
AND I'M NOT COMING BACK.

SYMBIWROTE

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EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

NEXT: PHILADELPHIA, HERE WE COME!

IN VENOM #28, ON SALE IN DECEMBER!

MARVEL

BUNN
LARRAZ
LOUGHRIDGE

036

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned-war-hero, inspired by the amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

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Monday.
A PERSON CAN GO AN ENTIRE LIFETIME WITHOUT ACCURATELY IDENTIFYING THEIR SHTICK.
THAT ONE THING THAT MAKES THEM TRULY SPECIAL.
Tuesday.
AND I HAVEN'T ALWAYS KNOWN WHAT SET ME APART FROM THE COMPETITION.
WHAT MAKES ME SPECIAL?

Wednesday.
AM I A FORMER HIGH SCHOOL ALL-STAR? AN INJURED VET? A HERO?
A MONSTER?
IS IT THE ALIEN SYMBIOTE THAT'S BONDED TO ME LIKE A SOUPED-UP PARASITE?
Thursday.
IT TOOK A LOT OF TIME, AND MORE THAN A FEW HEADACHES...
...BUT I FINALLY FIGURED OUT THE GIMMICK THAT'S DEFINED WHO I AM FOR SO LONG.

Friday.
DRINKS
I'M STARTING A NEW LIFE...AND EVERY SECOND OF EVERY DAY...
...I'M TERRIFIED OF OVERCOMPLICATING THE @#$% OUT OF IT!
Saturday.
THAT SEEMS TO BE MY GIFT.
OF COURSE, NOW THAT I RECOGNIZE THAT TRAIT...
...IT'S TIME FOR A LITTLE COURSE CORRECTION.

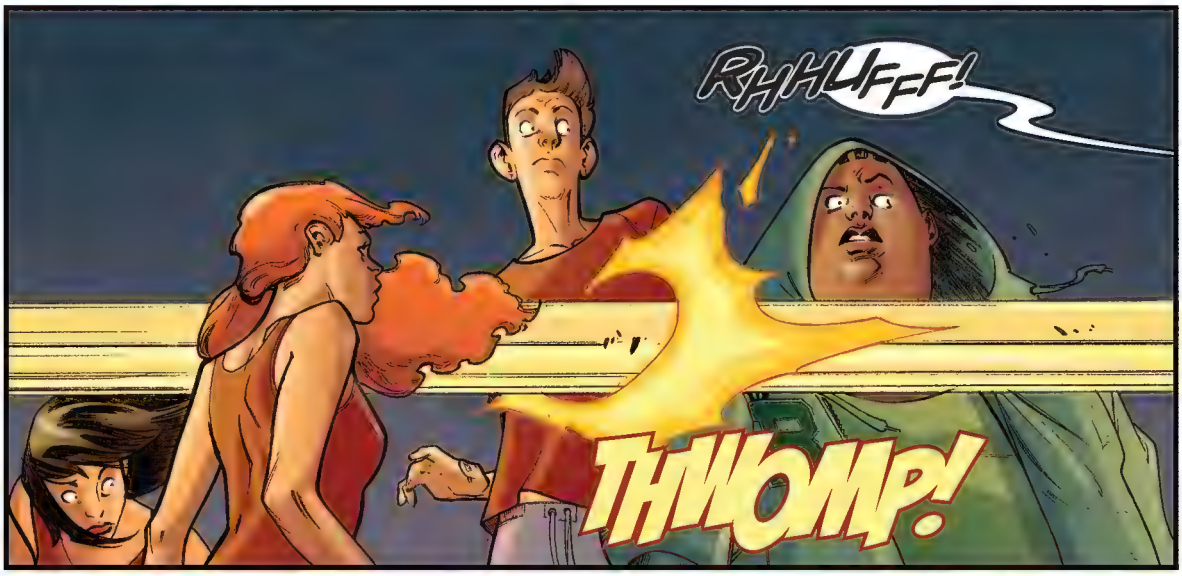
Sunday.
KEEP IT SIMPLE.
THAT'S MY NEW MOTTO.
THE STRAIGHTFORWARD APPROACH WORKS BEST.
MY NAME IS EUGENE "FLASH" THOMPSON.
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS VENOM.
I'LL ADMIT... IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I ATTENDED CHURCH SERVICES.
BUT I DON'T REMEMBER QUITE SO MUCH CRANK BEING PASSED AROUND DURING COMMUNION.
LORD OGRE
I MAY NOT BE THE BEST SUPER HERO IN THE BIZ, BUT I'M WHAT PHILADELPHIA'S GOT.

YOU'RE GONNA SHOOT AT ME? IN HERE?
YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?
BECAUSE IF YOU'RE NOT--
YAA!
--YOU MAY TAKE THE PRIZE FOR THE STUPIDEST METH COOKS EVER!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY DANGEROUS CHEMICALS YOU'VE SQUIRRELED AWAY HERE?
DOES THE WORD "COMBUSTIBLE" MEAN NOTHING TO YOU?
UNFF!
THR-THRAK!
THIS TELLS ME SOMETHING--SOMETHING IMPORTANT.
YOU FELLAS AREN'T SMART ENOUGH TO MANAGE AN OPERATION LIKE THIS ON YOUR OWN.
PLEASE... DON'T... PLEASE...
I WASN'T GONNA SHOOT...I SWEAR....
SO WHY DON'T YOU DO YOUR VERY BEST TO INGRATIATE YOURSELF TO ME RIGHT HERE AND NOW--
--AND TELL ME ALL ABOUT WHOEVER IT IS WHO'S CALLING YOUR SHOTS.

Monday.
SEE...I'VE LEARNED THAT THE WORLD IS AS COMPLEX AND CONVOLUTED AS YOU LET IT BE.
I'VE BROUGHT A LOT OF GRIEF INTO MY LIFE. I'VE COMPLICATED THINGS WITH BAD DECISIONS... WITH BOOZE...WITH ONE SCREWUP AFTER ANOTHER.
THESE DAYS, THOUGH, MY JOB'S PRETTY STRAIGHTFORWARD.
WHEN BAD PEOPLE CRAWL OUT OF THEIR HOLES, I THUMP THEM BACK DOWN.
ROUGH 'EM UP, GIVE 'EM A LITTLE SCARE, ALERT THE PROPER AUTHORITIES, VANISH INTO THE SHADOWS...
AND MAKE IT TO WORK BRIGHT-EYED AND BUSHY-TAILED THE NEXT MORNING.
NOTHING TO IT.
PUT THE PHONE AWAY, ANDI.
IF YOU'RE NOT GONNA PARTICIPATE WITH THE OTHERS, YOU CAN AT LEAST PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT YOU'RE MISSING.
WHATEVER.

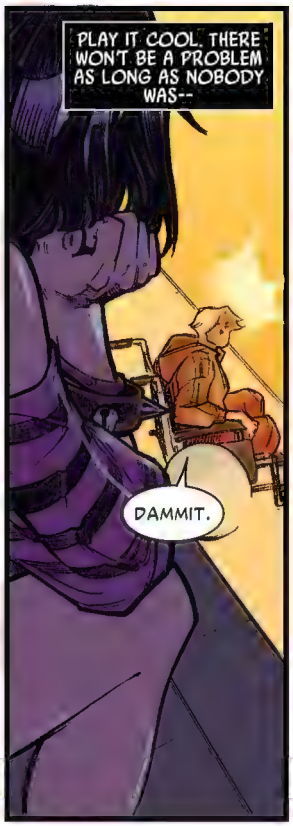
DOESN'T LOOK LIKE I'M MISSING MUCH.
YOU KNOW, YOU ONLY GET SO MANY FREE PASSES IN THIS CLASS.
YOU'RE A SMART GIRL.
I'D HATE TO THINK YOU MIGHT FAIL P.E. BECAUSE YOU DON'T WANT TO CHANGE CLOTHES.
MAYBE I JUST DON'T SEE THE SCHOLASTIC VALUE OF DODGEBALL.
WOMP!
AND STAY DOWN, GIMP!
RHEEE!
HEY! WATCH THE UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS, DARIUS!
SORRY, COACH! THOUGHT I'D JUST GIVE THESE DEAD-WEIGHTS SOME INCENTIVE TO AVOID THE BALL.
YEAH... THIS IS WAY EDUCATIONAL.

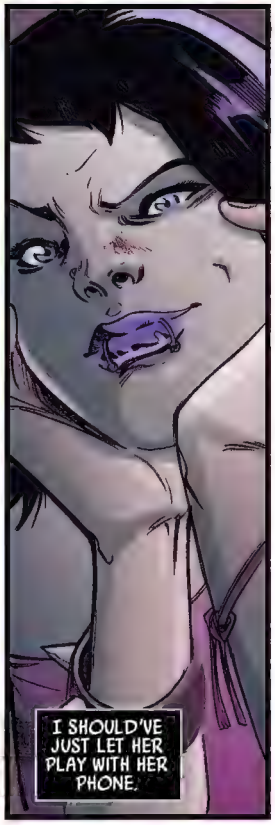
TAKE DARIUS FOWLER, FOR EXAMPLE. WHY DOES HE GET UNDER MY SKIN SO BADLY?
SIMPLE. I USED TO BE HIM.
WHAT WOULD I DO IF I COULD GO BACK IN TIME AND CONFRONT MY YOUNGER SELF?
I'D SHAKE HIM TILL HIS BRAINS OOZED OUT HIS EARS.
OOF!
YEAH! GIMP NUMBER TWO DOWN!
WHAT'S WRONG, KYLE? DID I BRUISE THAT BIG, FRAGILE BRAIN OF YOURS?
YOU'RE NOT GONNA CRY, ARE YOU?
SEE? BEING THE SMARTEST KID IN SCHOOL DON'T MATTER--
--IF YOU DON'T LEARN HOW TO DUCK.
I MEAN, I'M A TEACHER.
AND SOMEBODY HAS TO TEACH THAT KID A LESSON, RIGHT?
I NEVER SAID KEEPING THINGS SIMPLE WAS GONNA BE EASY FOR ME.


RHHUFFF!
THWOMP!

W-WHO...
WHO THREW THAT?!
HaHaHa HaHa Ha

THAT...WAS UNINTENTIONAL.
STILL...NO REAL HARM DONE.


PLAY IT COOL. THERE WON'T BE A PROBLEM AS LONG AS NOBODY WAS--
DAMMIT.


I SHOULD'VE JUST LET HER PLAY WITH HER PHONE.

THERE I GO, OVERCOMPLICATING THE SITUATION AGAIN.
CHANCES ARE...IT ALL HAPPENED SO FAST... ANDI DIDN'T SEE A THING.
BLAM! BLAM! B-BLAM!
AND IT'S NOT LIKE SHE SAID ANYTHING TO ME. SHE BOLTED OUT OF THE GYM AS SOON AS THE BELL SOUNDED.
MY SECRET'S SAFE...AND I NEED TO FOCUS ON THE TASK AT HAND.
VINAGRE
TODOS
SKRRREEEEEE
ANOTHER SHIPMENT OF DRUGS OR WEAPONS OR... WHATEVER... FINDING ITS WAY TO ANOTHER WOULD-BE CRIME WARLORD WITH A COLORFUL NAME.
LORD OGRE... HERE I--
SHAKE DOWN ENOUGH LOW-LIFES AND YOU HEAR THE NAME MORE THAN ONCE.

WOOOAH--
UNNF!
SCREEECCH!
THWUMP!
WHAT IF ANDI DID CATCH A GLIMPSE OF MY ALTER-EGO?
WHAT IF SHE'S POSTING GOTHIC POETRY ABOUT HER SHAPE-CHANGING GYM TEACHER ON TUMBLR OR SOME OTHER ANGSTY CORNER OF THE INTERNET?
SO WHAT IF SHE DID SEE WHAT HAPPENED?
FOCUS, THOMPSON!
HEAD IN THE GAME!
YOU CAN DEAL WITH THAT LATER... AFTER YOU CATCH THE BAD GUYS.
IF THEY HAVEN'T GOTTEN AWAY ALREADY.
THEY'RE NOT LETTING UP ON THE GAS. I NEED--
HEH.

WHERE THE HELL HAVE YOU BEEN?
RAN INTO SOME FREAK...A VIGILANTE OR SOMETHING.
HAD TO SHAKE HIM.
THOUGHT IT BEST TO--
VVAAAAAA-RRRRRRRRR

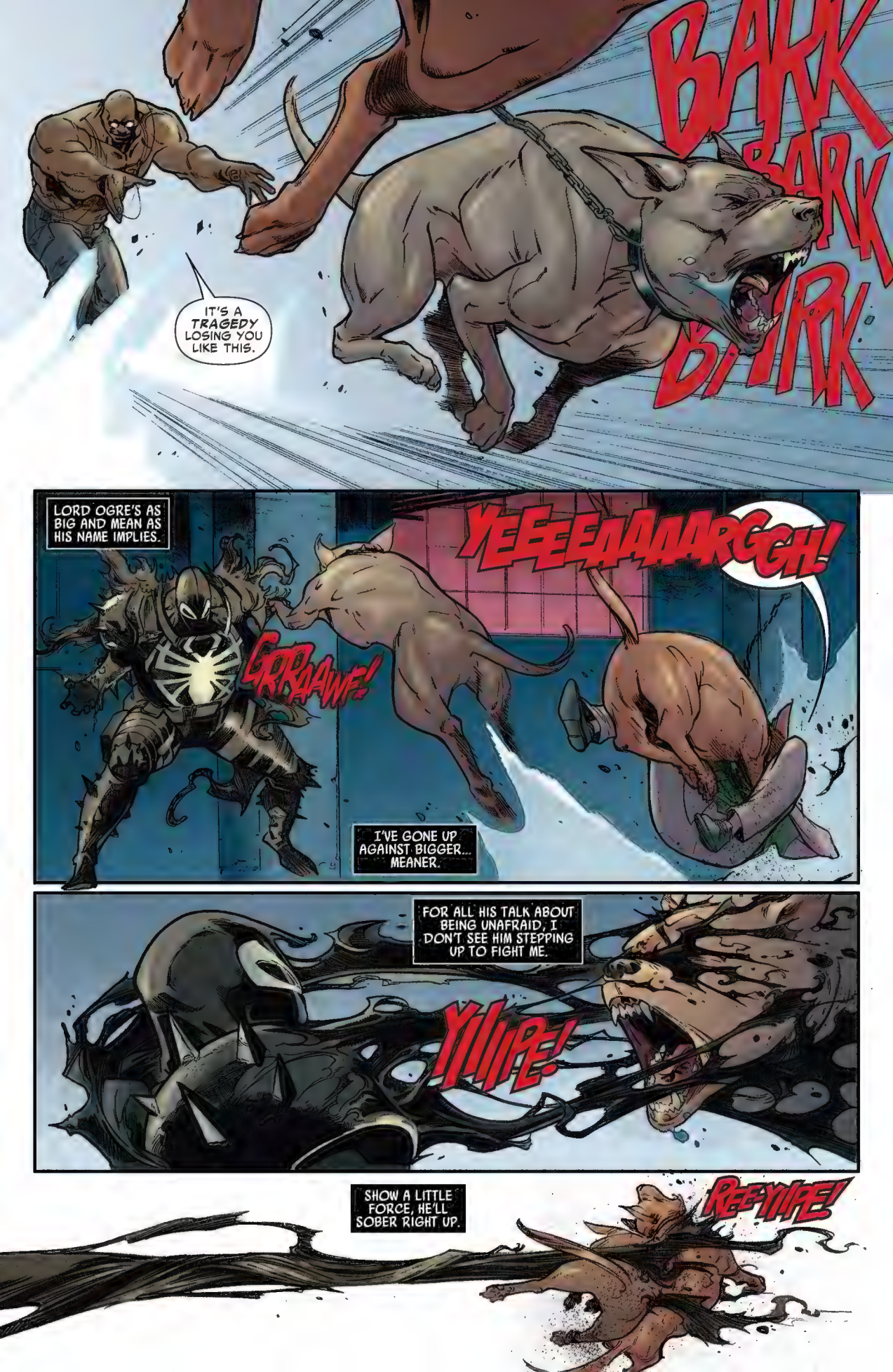
ENTER, THE VENOM-MOBILE!
CRASH
VRROOOO

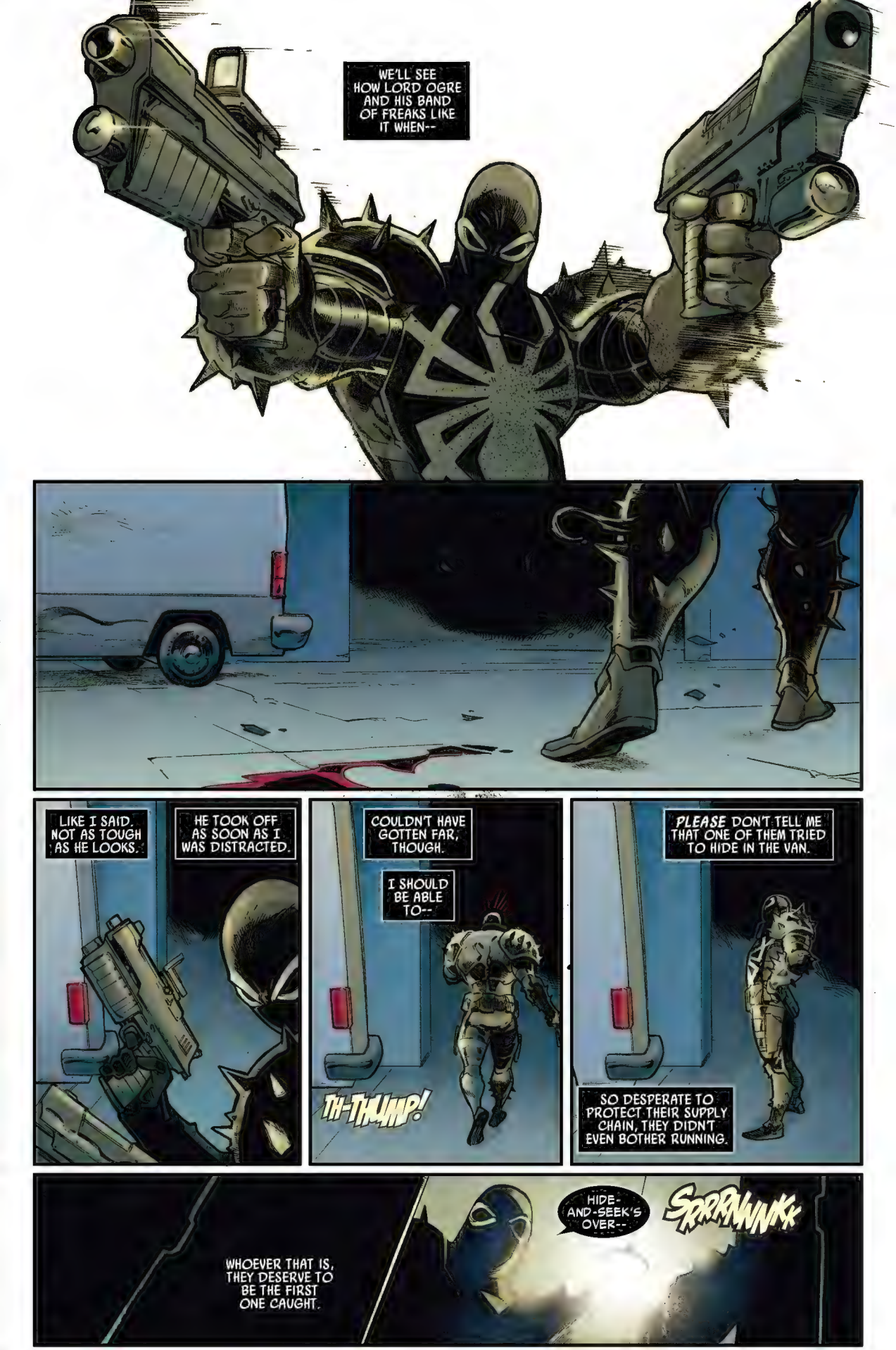
BEEN CHASING THESE LEADS NIGHT AFTER NIGHT.
FWWASH!
THRASH!
AND IT ALL BROUGHT ME HERE.
BLAM!
B-BLAM!
BLAM!
AGGH!
THWIP!
THE TRAIL...AND THE COURSE OF ACTION...COULDN'T BE MORE CLEAR.
SHUT THEM DOWN--HARD.
YAAAAH!

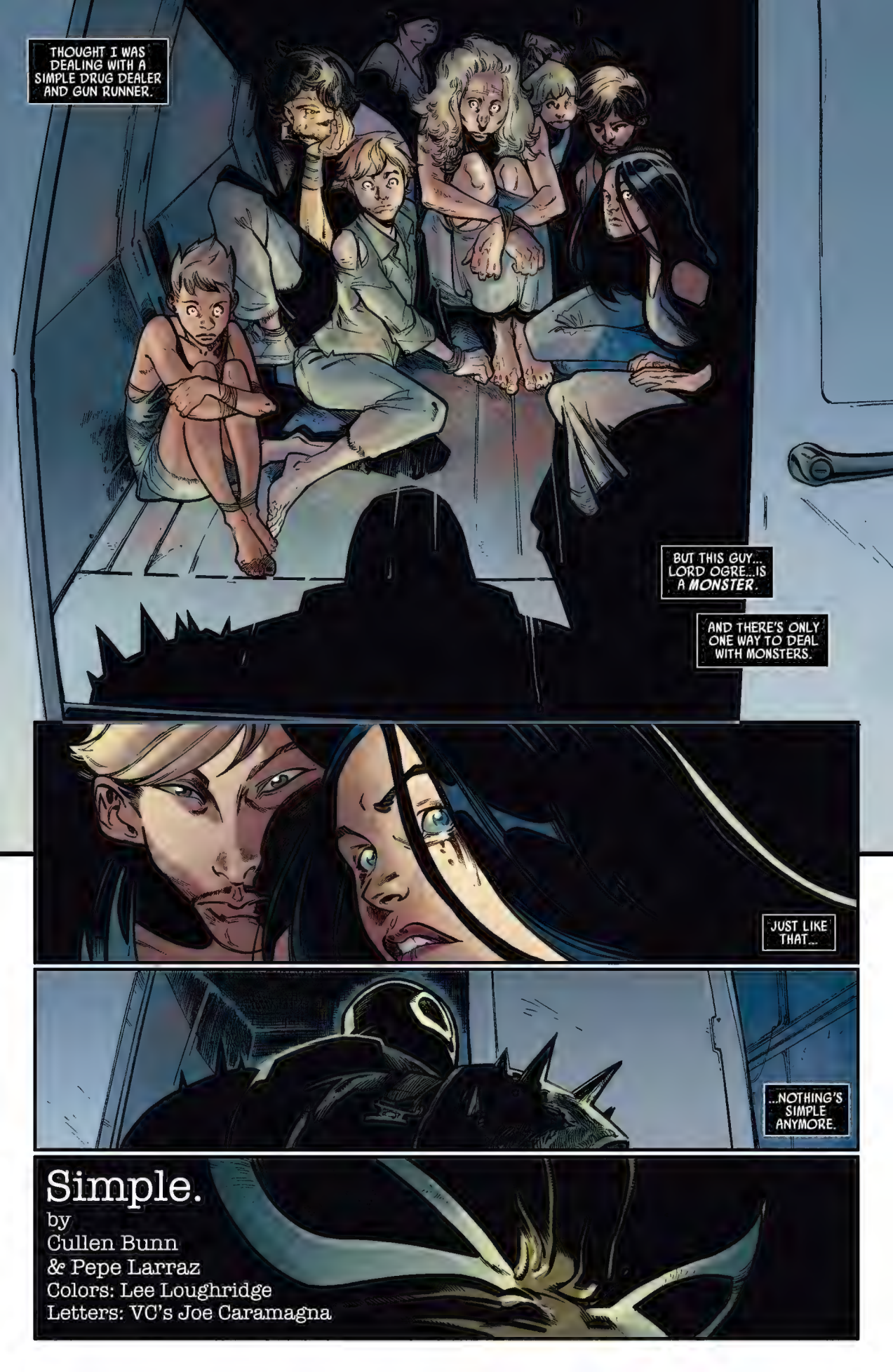
CLEAN UP THE STREETS.
THAT'S WHAT HEROES DO.
BLAM!
BLAM!
JUST NEED TO PUT THE FEAR OF GOD INTO ONE OF THESE PUNKS.
GET MYSELF ONE STEP CLOSER TO THE BIG BOSS.
BLAM!
PTU!
YOU'LL DO!
TELL ME WHERE HE IS!
WHERE'S YOUR BOSS?
I... I...
I'M RIGHT HERE, BOGEYMAN.

YOU COME LOOKING FOR LORD OGRE... AND YOU'LL FIND HIM.
BUT THIS IS A CAREFUL-WHAT-YOU-WISH-FOR SCENARIO, SEE?
BECAUSE, I'M ASSUMING IT'S YOU WHO HAS BEEN GIVING MY EMPLOYEES A BEAT-DOWN FROM ONE SIDE OF PHILLY TO THE OTHER.
YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT MAKING AN ASSUMPTION.
SO I'M WRONG?
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT.
I'VE BEEN PEEING IN YOUR CORN FLAKES.
BUT YOU'RE STILL AN ASS.

I'M A BUSINESSMAN.
IF YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, YOU COULD'VE CALLED AND ARRANGED A MEETING.
FROM THE LOOKS OF THINGS, I PRETTY MUCH JUST PUT YOU OUT OF BUSINESS.
BUT IF YOU WANT ME TO PUT MORE OF A FINE POINT ON THE SITUATION, I CAN HANDLE THAT.
YOU THINK YOU SCARE ME WITH YOUR TOUGH TALK?
I AIN'T NEVER BEEN AFRAID OF NOTHING.
I LOOK INTO THE MIRROR EVERY MORNING, AND I SEE MY OWN CRUELTY...MY OWN HEARTLESSNESS... STARING BACK AT ME.
TELL ME.
IF I CAN FACE THAT DOWN EVERY DAY, WHAT DO I HAVE TO FEAR FROM A BOGEYMAN LIKE YOU?
I GUESS WE'LL FIND OUT, HUH?
M-MY LORD... I WOULDN'T HAVE SAID NOTHING...
...I WOULDN'T HAVE FLIPPED ON YOU... NOT EVER...
Y-YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?
OF COURSE.
YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A GOOD APOSTLE.


BARK
BARK
BARK
IT'S A TRAGEDY LOSING YOU LIKE THIS.
LORD OGRE'S AS BIG AND MEAN AS HIS NAME IMPLIES.
YEEEEEDAAAARGGH!
GRRAAWF!
I'VE GONE UP AGAINST BIGGER... MEANER.
FOR ALL HIS TALK ABOUT BEING UNAFRAID, I DON'T SEE HIM STEPPING UP TO FIGHT ME.
YIIIPE!
SHOW A LITTLE FORCE, HE'LL SOBER RIGHT UP.
REEYIIPE!


WE'LL SEE HOW LORD OGRE AND HIS BAND OF FREAKS LIKE IT WHEN--
LIKE I SAID. NOT AS TOUGH AS HE LOOKS.
HE TOOK OFF AS SOON AS I WAS DISTRACTED.
COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN FAR, THOUGH.
I SHOULD BE ABLE TO--
TH-THUMP!
PLEASE DON'T TELL ME THAT ONE OF THEM TRIED TO HIDE IN THE VAN.
SO DESPERATE TO PROTECT THEIR SUPPLY CHAIN, THEY DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER RUNNING.
WHOEVER THAT IS, THEY DESERVE TO BE THE FIRST ONE CAUGHT.
HIDE-AND-SEEK'S OVER--
SRRKNNNK


THOUGHT I WAS DEALING WITH A SIMPLE DRUG DEALER AND GUN RUNNER.
BUT THIS GUY... LORD OGRE... IS A MONSTER.
AND THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO DEAL WITH MONSTERS.
JUST LIKE THAT...
...NOTHING'S SIMPLE ANYMORE.
Simple.
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Venomites! It's time for another game of Editorial Musical Chairs! Huzzah! (I'm just going to ignore all that groaning with forced enthusiasm!)

Since I was PROMOTED (dusting shoulder off) a few months ago to full editor, I've been moving around my workload a bit. Luckily for you, Venom is my latest addition and I'm really excited to be onboard. And that's saying a lot for someone who has always found black, slimy substances from outer space to be slightly off-putting.

What I love about Flash Thompson as Venom is that Flash was the guy I hated growing up--both as the character and who he represented in real life. I'm not saying I love bullies, I love the idea that bullies like Flash can change. And in Flash's case, he became the very opposite of who he'd been perceived to be for much of his life. It's no coincidence then that the very thing that made him a super hero has its own share of demons. Flash's constant struggle is to keep these demons at bay, to continuously strive to be the better person, the better hero, to not fall into the patterns of his past life. And that struggle is what makes him such an empathetic character—because we're all doing the same things, just in different ways.

The villain becomes the hero—how very inspiring, how very hopeful. It makes you think that maybe evil can be eradicated, maybe good can overcome the bad, maybe we are all capable of doing so much more than we believe we can. Personally though, I'm pretty sure we knew that all along.

Till next time, I'll be here sitting patiently waiting for your thoughts. As always send your letters, your pictures, your hopes, dreams and fears! Okay, maybe not the last three.

XOXO
Sana MiniB Amanat

NEXT:

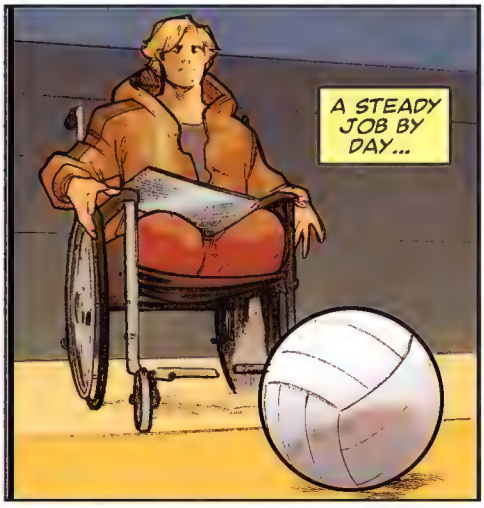
MARVEL

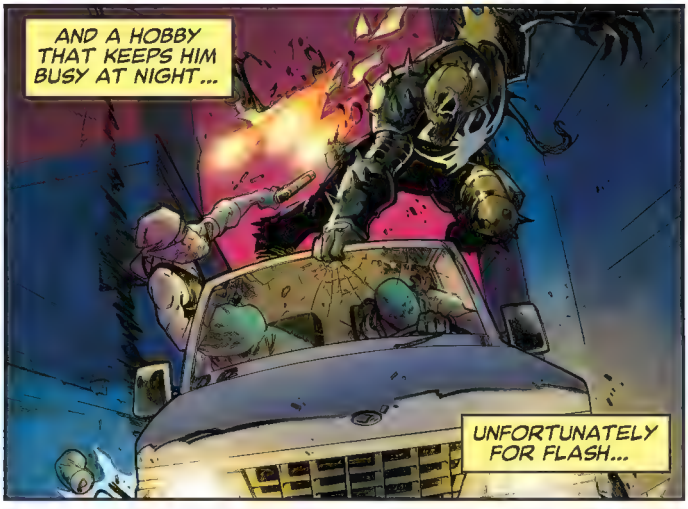
BUNN
JACINTO
LOUGHRIDGE

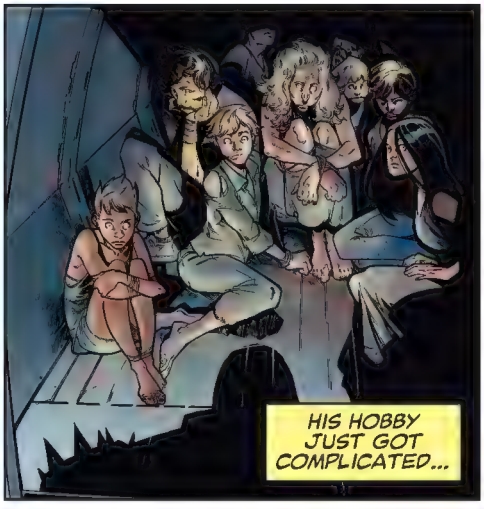
037

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned-war-hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM







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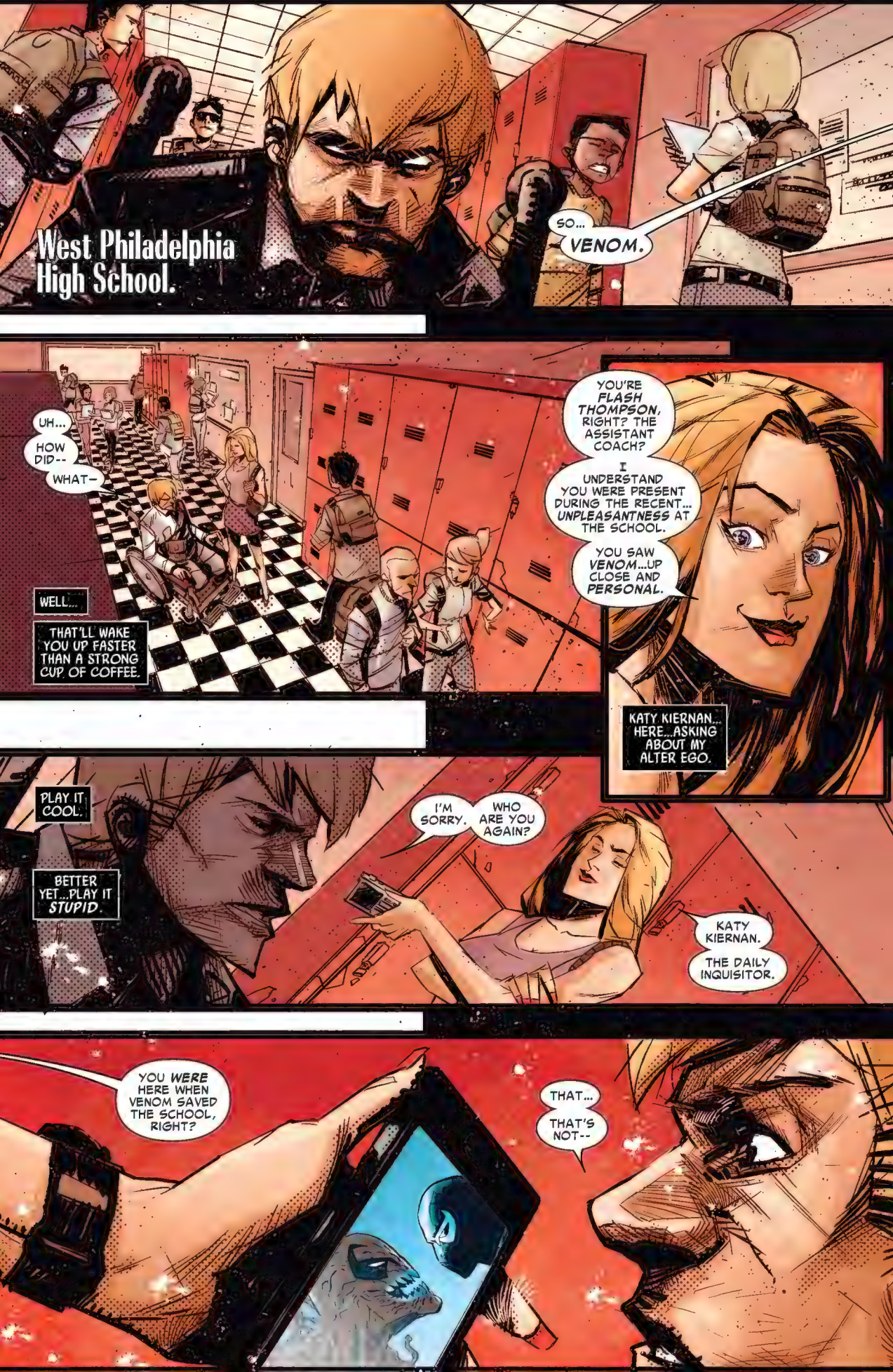
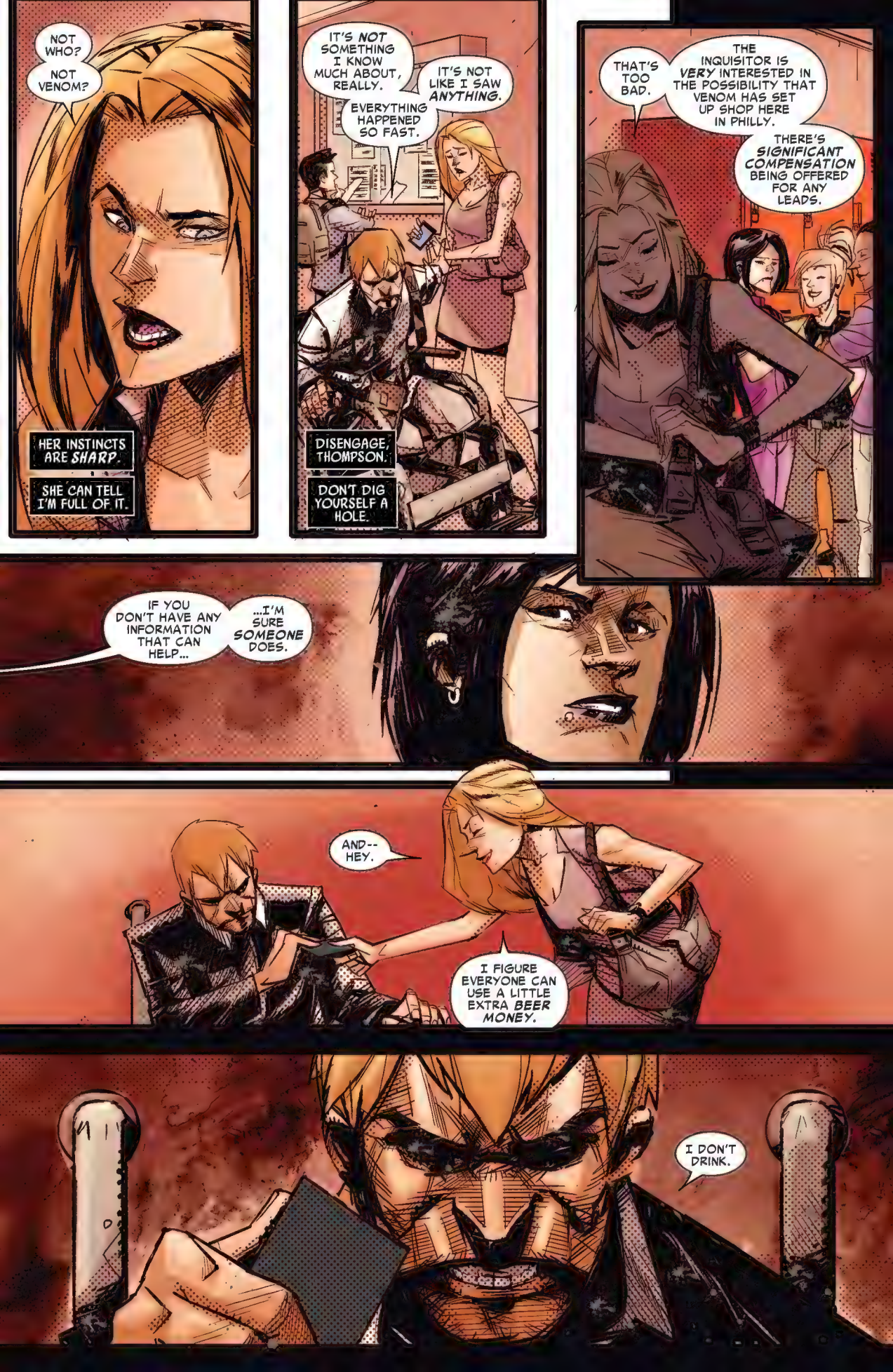

West Philadelphia High School.
SO... VENOM.
UH... HOW DID-- WHAT-
WELL... THAT'LL WAKE YOU UP FASTER THAN A STRONG CUP OF COFFEE.
YOU'RE FLASH THOMPSON, RIGHT? THE ASSISTANT COACH?
I UNDERSTAND YOU WERE PRESENT DURING THE RECENT... UNPLEASANTNESS AT THE SCHOOL.
YOU SAW VENOM...UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL.
KATY KIERNAN... HERE...ASKING ABOUT MY ALTER EGO.
PLAY IT COOL.
BETTER YET...PLAY IT STUPID.
I'M SORRY. WHO ARE YOU AGAIN?
KATY KIERNAN. THE DAILY INQUISITOR.
YOU WERE HERE WHEN VENOM SAVED THE SCHOOL, RIGHT?
THAT... THAT'S NOT--


NOT WHO?
NOT VENOM?
HER INSTINCTS ARE SHARP.
SHE CAN TELL I'M FULL OF IT.
IT'S NOT SOMETHING I KNOW MUCH ABOUT, REALLY.
IT'S NOT LIKE I SAW ANYTHING.
EVERYTHING HAPPENED SO FAST.
DISENGAGE, THOMPSON.
DON'T DIG YOURSELF A HOLE.
THAT'S TOO BAD.
THE INQUISITOR IS VERY INTERESTED IN THE POSSIBILITY THAT VENOM HAS SET UP SHOP HERE IN PHILLY.
THERE'S SIGNIFICANT COMPENSATION BEING OFFERED FOR ANY LEADS.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY INFORMATION THAT CAN HELP...
...I'M SURE SOMEONE DOES.
AND-- HEY.
I FIGURE EVERYONE CAN USE A LITTLE EXTRA BEER MONEY.
I DON'T DRINK.

WELL, I DO.
MAYBE YOU CAN BUY ME A DRINK SOMETIME.
THE COMPANIONSHIP MIGHT JOG YOUR MEMORY.
AND HERE I THOUGHT I WAS DONE WITH THE THIRD DEGREE.
NO TELLING WHAT ANDI MIGHT ASK IF I DON'T SHUT HER DOWN...
...ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING THAT SHE MIGHT HAVE SPOTTED ME USING THE SYMBIOTE A FEW DAYS AGO.
WHO WAS THAT?
YOUR GIRLFRIEND?
ANDI...
YOU WERE EAVESDROPPING. YOU KNOW PERFECTLY WELL SHE'S NOT MY GIRLFRIEND.
I DUNNO.
JUST SEEMED LIKE YOU KNEW EACH OTHER, IS ALL, BUT NEITHER ONE OF YOU WANTED TO ADMIT IT.
LIKE SOME SORT OF CREEPY ROLEPLAY KIND OF THING.
SORRY TO DISAPPOINT.
I...
I DON'T KNOW HER AT ALL.
KATY KIERNAN

Vintage Coin-Op Warehouse.
KATY #$%&#$% KIERNAN!
HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HER IN WEEKS...AND ALL OF A SUDDEN SHE SHOWS UP AT MY DAY JOB...ASKING ME ABOUT VENOM!
THAT WASN'T PART OF THE DEAL! WE WERE SUPPOSED TO HELP EACH OTHER!
BUT NOW IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S TARGETING ME FOR HER NEXT BIG EXPOSE!
SMASH!
PISSES ME OFF.
MORE THAN A LITTLE.
AND THESE GUYS PAY THE PRICE FOR THAT.
HRRRRGGG
URBAN FIGHT

NOT LIKE THEY DON'T DESERVE IT.
KIDNAPPING PEOPLE FROM GOD-KNOWS-WHERE.
FORCING THEM TO WORK THEIR LABS.
OR WORSE.
GO! GET OUT OF HERE!
NOW!
THIS WAREHOUSE IS MORE THAN JUST A FRONT FOR ANOTHER DRUG LAB.
IT'S A NEST OF SUFFERING.
ALL IN THE NAME OF--
LORD OGRE.
WHERE DO I FIND HIM?
Y-YOU... DON'T...
WON'T EVER FIND HIM...BUT HE...HE'S FOUND... HE KNOWS WHERE...YOU...
NNNNNN
DAMN.
PASSED OUT.
GUESS I SQUEEZED TOO HARD.

GOOD NEWS IS... DUMBASS THUGS ARE NEVER IN SHORT SUPPLY.
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BEEN TRACKING THIS THUG...LORD OGRE... FROM ONE ILLICIT OP TO THE NEXT.
ALWAYS A STEP BEHIND HIM...AND HE COVERS ANY TRACKS THAT LEAD DIRECTLY TO HIM.
I'M CLOSE, THOUGH. I CAN FEEL IT.
OGRE'S GOT HIS FINGERS IN EVERY RACKET YOU CAN IMAGINE.
CRASH
HE'S A BIG FISH.
AND WHEN I FIND HIM, HE'S GONNA WISH--
WHAUUF!
SHHHH-WAKKOW
WHAP!
WHAT THE HELL? A SHIELD?
CAPTAIN AMERICA?

NO.
NOT CAP.
NICE SHOT, DEATH-SHIELD.
...PUNK-ASS AIN'T GONNA KNOW WHAT HITS HIM...
TAKE YOUR SHOT, JAGGED BOW.
FINISH HIM OFF AND LET'S CASH OUR CHECKS!
HASN'T ANYONE EVER TOLD YOU...
...PRETENDING TO BE SUPER HEROES IS DANGEROUS BUSINESS?
FUNNY.
WAS GONNA ASK YOU THE SAME THING.
GUY'S GOT SKILL.
ALMOST AS GOOD AS HAWKEYE.

JUST AS TRICKY, TOO!
AAARGH!
BOOM
UKK!
CHK
YEEEEAAARRRGH!
SONIC ARROWS.
WHOEVER THESE GUYS ARE...THEY CAME PREPARED.
SNAP

PREPARED TO HUNT ME.
MY TURN!
UNNF!
WHAM
HITS LIKE A LOCOMOTIVE.
JUST AS STRONG AS SPIDEY.
DIDN'T YOU GET THE MEMO?
THERE'S ONLY ONE KNOCK-OFF WALL-CRAWLER ALLOWED IN PHILLY.
THWIP!
THWIP!
NAME'S BLOOD-SPIDER!
I'M NOT TRYING TO BE SPIDER-MAN!
YOU GOT THAT RIGHT!
I'VE FOUGHT SPIDER-MAN.
AND YOU AREN'T HIM!
RULLGGH!
SHRRPP! SHRRPP!
TOUGH LUCK FOR YOU.
NEITHER AM I.

RRRRAAAGH!
SMASH!
WHERE THE HELL DO THEY GROW THESE GUYS?
HE'S EVERY BIT AS TOUGH AS CAP HIMSELF!
THESE THREE... TOGETHER... ALMOST OUTCLASS ME.
WATCH—
OGRE'S PULLING OUT THE BIG GUNS.
BIG GUNS MIGHT BE ABLE TO LEAD ME RIGHT BACK TO THE BOSS.
GET 'EM WEBBED UP AND START ASKING QUESTIONS.
NEXT TIME...
...YOU SHOULD BRING MORE--
HRRK!
SSZZZZZKKZZZZZ
ME AND MY BIG MOUTH.

HRRRRR...
CONSTRICTOR.
KZZZZT
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH ABOUT HIM TO KNOW HE'S BAD NEWS.
AND THE HITS JUST KEEP ON COMING.
LIKE I SAID... THERE'S ALWAYS MORE WHERE THAT CAME FROM.
KNOW THIS GUY'S FILE, TOO... MR. DEATHSTRIKE...OR LORD DEATHSTRIKE...OR SOMETHING WITH "DEATH" IN IT.
Y-YOU... PUNKS...CAN GIVE UP ANY SECOND NOW.
JUST ABOUT TO GET MY... SECOND WIND.
KZZT
HEY, PAL!
BACK OFF!
I NABBED HIM FIRST.
MY COLLAR, MY PAYDAY!
KZZT
KZZT

BOTH OF YOU BACK OFF!
WE WERE HERE FIRST!
NOT HARDLY.
BEEN CASING THIS JOINT FOR HOURS.
I SAW EVERY PAINFUL SECOND OF YOU AMATEURS GETTING YOUR ASSES HANDED TO YOU.
SOMETHING TELLS ME "SILENT BUT DEADLY" HAS BEEN HERE FOR A WHILE, TOO.
SO WHAT?
EITHER WAY, VENOM'S COMING WITH ME!
AND THERE AIN'T A THING--
KSHING
SKZING

AW, HELL NO!

KA-BOOM! BOOM!

SHZIING

KTING

REALLY?

YOU JERKS ARE JUST BEING SORE LOSERS!

FACE IT-- THE BETTER MERC WON!

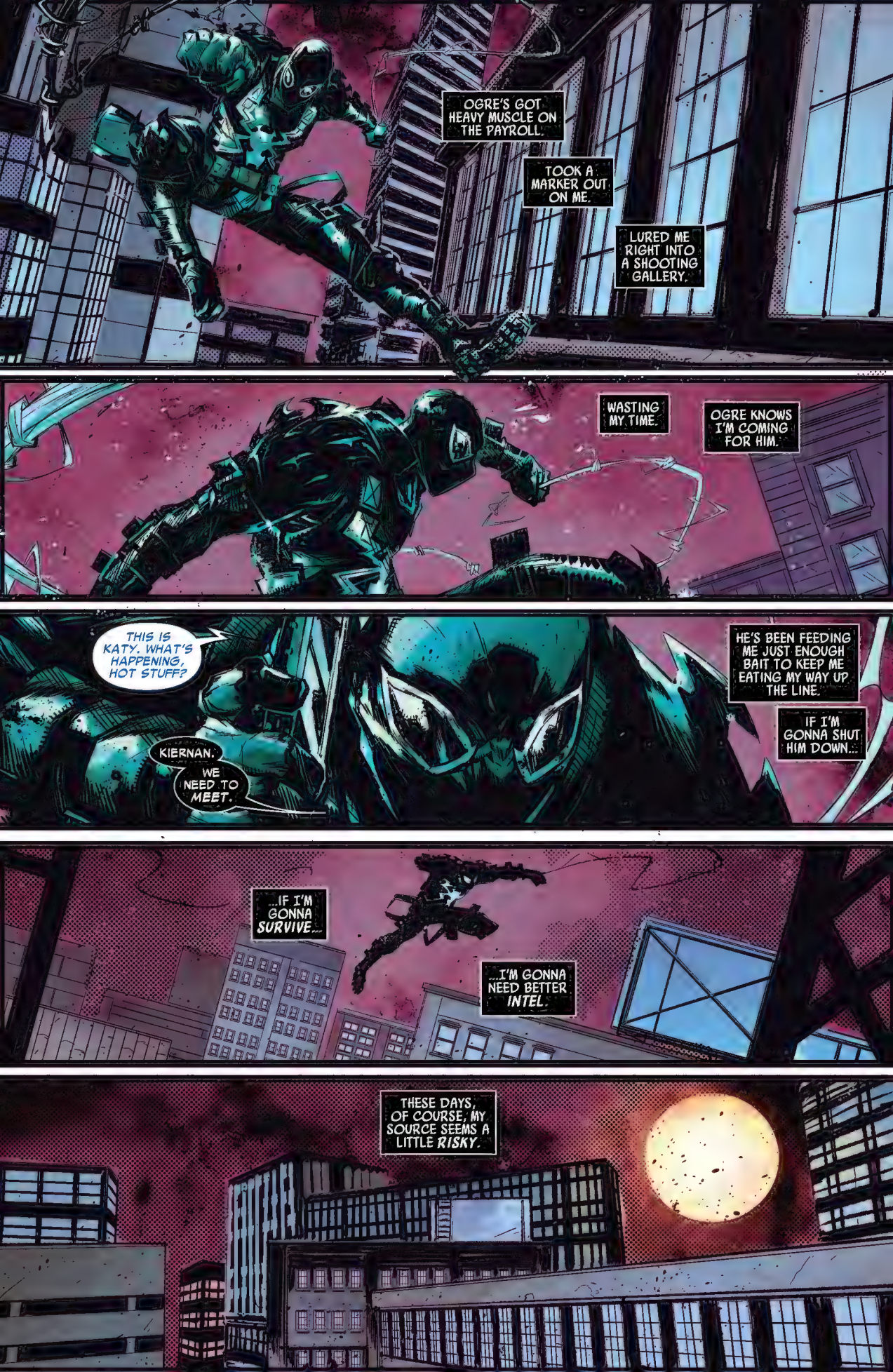
IF I HAVE TO KICK YOUR BUTTS TO PROVE IT...

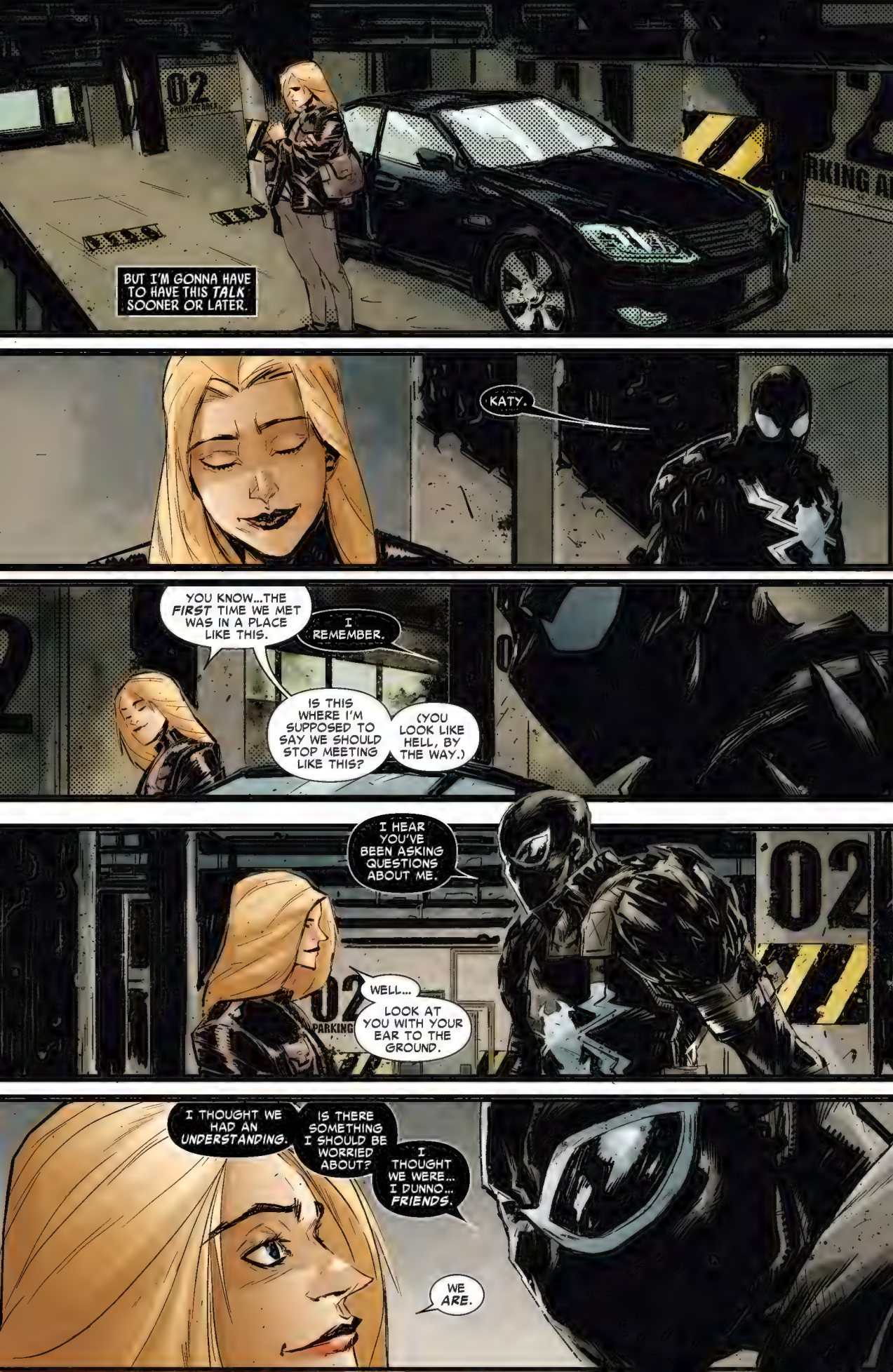
FINE BY ME.

HEY...

WAIT A SECOND.

DID ANYBODY SEE WHERE *VENOM* WENT?


OGRE'S GOT HEAVY MUSCLE ON THE PAYROLL.
TOOK A MARKER OUT ON ME.
LURED ME RIGHT INTO A SHOOTING GALLERY.
WASTING MY TIME.
OGRE KNOWS I'M COMING FOR HIM.
THIS IS KATY. WHAT'S HAPPENING, HOT STUFF?
KIERNAN. WE NEED TO MEET.
HE'S BEEN FEEDING ME JUST ENOUGH BAIT TO KEEP ME EATING MY WAY UP THE LINE.
IF I'M GONNA SHUT HIM DOWN...
...IF I'M GONNA SURVIVE...
...I'M GONNA NEED BETTER INTEL.
THESE DAYS, OF COURSE, MY SOURCE SEEMS A LITTLE RISKY.

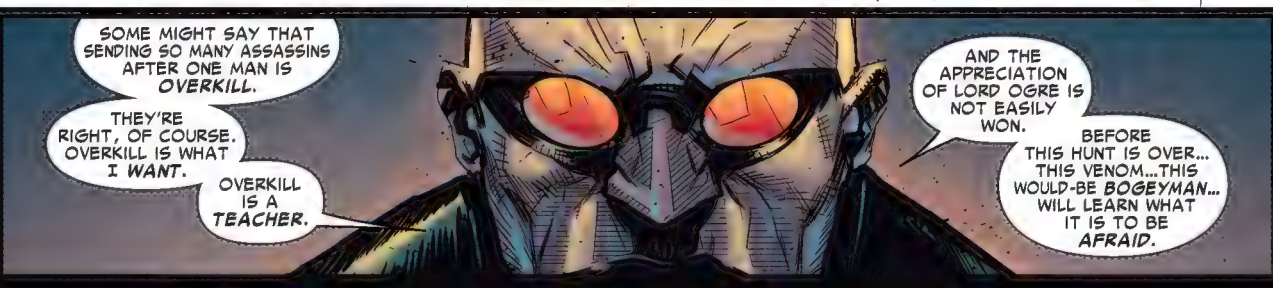

BUT I'M GONNA HAVE TO HAVE THIS *TALK* SOONER OR LATER.
KATY.
YOU KNOW...THE *FIRST* TIME WE MET WAS IN A PLACE LIKE THIS.
I REMEMBER.
IS THIS WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO SAY WE SHOULD STOP MEETING LIKE THIS?
(YOU LOOK LIKE HELL, BY THE WAY.)
I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT ME.
WELL...
LOOK AT YOU WITH YOUR EAR TO THE GROUND.
I THOUGHT WE HAD AN *UNDERSTANDING*.
IS THERE SOMETHING I SHOULD BE WORRIED ABOUT?
I THOUGHT WE WERE... I DUNNO... *FRIENDS*.
WE *ARE*.

BUT I ALSO HAVE BOSSES... BOSSES WHO ARE INTERESTED IN WHAT'S GOING ON HERE.
ASK YOURSELF...WHO DO YOU WANT POKING AROUND IN YOUR BUSINESS?
ME?
OR MAYBE SOME OTHER REPORTER WHO DOESN'T HAVE ANY LOYALTY TO YOU?
SO YOU'RE LOYAL TO ME?
IF I WANTED TO KNOW YOUR SECRET IDENTITY OR WHATEVER... I'D KNOW ALREADY.
AT LEAST WITH ME HERE...I CAN GUIDE THE PUBLICITY.
Y'KNOW... WHAT YOU'RE DOING...IT'S AN OLD TRICK.
USED TO BE PRETTY GOOD AT IT MYSELF.
IF YOU'RE SMART ENOUGH, YOU CAN CONVINCE SOMEONE THAT YOU'RE BULLYING THEM FOR THEIR OWN GOOD.
YOU THINK I'M BULLYING YOU?
DOESN'T MATTER.
BECAUSE... RIGHT NOW... I NEED YOU.

OF COURSE YOU DO.
I'M SERIOUS, KATY.
THIS GUY I'M AFTER-- I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HIM.
AND IF I STAND A CHANCE OF STOPPING HIM BEFORE HE KILLS ME, I NEED--
RESOURCES.
YOU KNOW... INFORMANTS...SPIES... FRIENDLIES.
WEAPONS SUPPLIERS... SAFE HOUSES... MAYBE EVEN A HEADQUARTERS.
IF YOU PLAN ON BEING PHILADELPHIA'S *DARK AVENGER*, YOU NEED *ASSETS*.
SOUNDS GREAT.
EXCEPT THERE'S ALREADY A CONTRACT ON MY HEAD.
WHATEVER I'M GONNA DO, IT'S GOTTA BE *FAST*.
LUCKILY, YOU'RE OFF TO A GOOD START.
BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT *ME*.

I WANT TO THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING.
Lord Ogre's Penthouse.

WHETHER YOU ARE HERE FOR THE MONEY... FOR THE HONOR... OR FOR THE THRILL OF THE HUNT...
...NO MATTER YOUR MOTIVES, CREED, OR CULT...
...YOU HAVE MY GRATITUDE.
LOOK AROUND YOU... BECAUSE ONE OF YOU...OR ONE OF THE OTHERS WHO ARRIVED EARLIER TODAY...WILL PROVE YOURSELF IN MY EYES...
...AND KILL AGENT VENOM LIKE THE DOG HE IS.


SOME MIGHT SAY THAT SENDING SO MANY ASSASSINS AFTER ONE MAN IS OVERKILL.
THEY'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE. OVERKILL IS WHAT I WANT.
OVERKILL IS A TEACHER.
AND THE APPRECIATION OF LORD OGRE IS NOT EASILY WON.
BEFORE THIS HUNT IS OVER... THIS VENOM...THIS WOULD-BE BOGEYMAN... WILL LEARN WHAT IT IS TO BE AFRAID.

FEAR AND MURDER-IN-EXCESS?
SOUNDS LIKE YER SINGING MY TUNE.

SORRY I'M A LITTLE LATE TO THE PARTY.
HAD A LITTLE TROUBLE SNAGGING A HALL-PASS.
BUT OL' JACK O'LANTERN'S THROWING HIS PUMPKIN INTO THE RING.
AND I THINK I'VE GOT A BIT OF AN EDGE OVER THESE OTHER YAHOOS.
AFTER ALL...
IT TAKES A BOGEYMAN TO KILL A BOGEYMAN.
To Be Continued...

SYMBIWROTE

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NEXT!

SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #12

SCARLET SPIDER #18

MORBIUS #6

VENOM

MARVEL

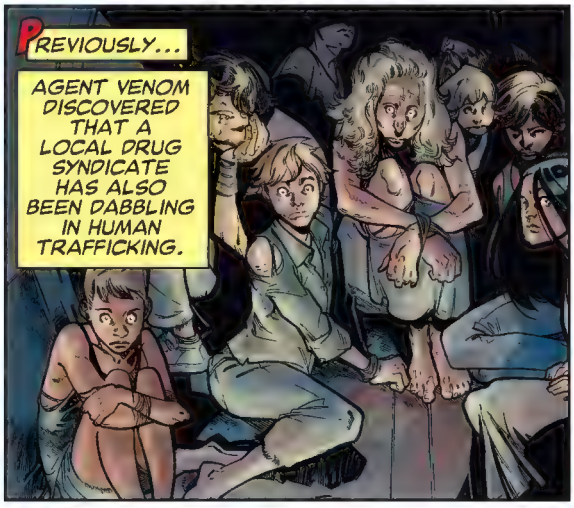
SHARE YOUR UNIVERSE

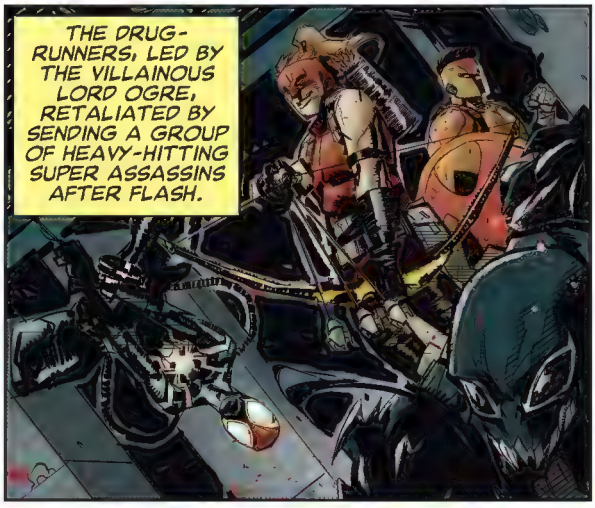
BUNN
JACINTO
LOUGHRIDGE

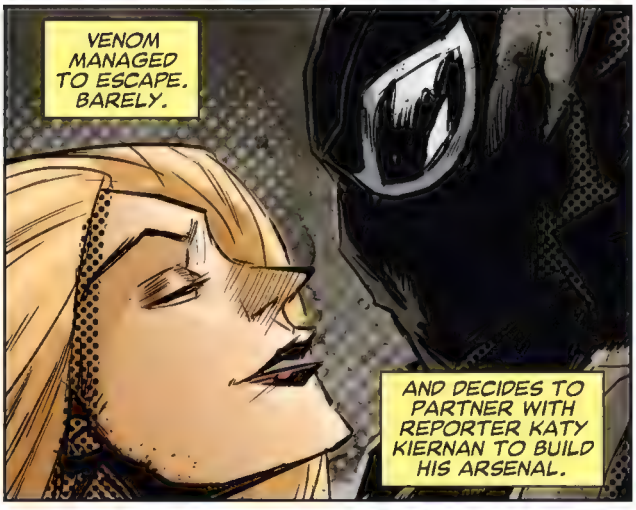
038

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned-war-hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM




THE DRUG-RUNNERS, LED BY THE VILLAINOUS LORD OGRE, RETALIATED BY SENDING A GROUP OF HEAVY-HITTING SUPER ASSASSINS AFTER FLASH.



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Philadelphia.
MORNIN' SUNSHINE.
SURE THING.
AND WHAT'S SO GOOD ABOUT IT?
DIDN'T SAY IT WAS GOOD.
JUST SAID MORNIN'.
WHICH IS WHAT IT IS.
Cereal
WHAT'S FOR BREAKFAST, ANDREA?
WELL...WHILE THIS MAY LOOK LIKE A COLORFUL BOX OF SUGARY CEREAL, IT'S REALLY A COLORFUL BOX FULL OF EGGS BENEDICT, BELGIAN WAFFLES, AND FRESH FRUIT.
Milk
CEREAL SUITS ME JUST FINE. BREAKFAST OF CHAMPEENS.
AND THERE'S ALWAYS A TOY SURPRISE.
WHATEVER. NOBODY DOES TOYS ANYMORE, DAD, AND YOU KNOW IT.
YOU MIGHT GET AN ONLINE CODE OR SOMETHING.

SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND, KIDDO?
YOU EVER KNOW A SECRET ABOUT SOMEONE?
I MEAN A REALLY IMPORTANT SECRET?
I THINK I KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT SOMEONE.
...SOMEONE AT SCHOOL...
...AND THEY DON'T REALIZE I'VE FIGURED IT OUT...
...BUT IT'S THE KIND OF THING THAT...I DUNNO...IF IT WAS ME...I'D WANT TO TALK TO SOMEBODY ABOUT.
MAYBE IT'S STUPID...
...BUT I THOUGHT I MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP.
HERE'S THE THING ABOUT SECRETS...
THEY HAVE A WAY OF CRUSHING PEOPLE... HURTING PEOPLE... EITHER THE PEOPLE WHO KEEP THEM...OR THE PEOPLE WHO GET BLINDSIDED BY THEM.
I MEAN... LOOK...YOUR MOM HAD SECRETS I ONLY WISH I COULD HAVE TALKED TO HER ABOUT.
I GUESS THAT'S NOT MUCH HELP.
I CAN'T SAY THAT I'VE EVER BEEN GOOD AT THE WHOLE "FATHERLY ADVICE" THING.
WELL...

"YOU DO THE BEST YOU CAN."
REALLY?
REALLY?
YOU'RE GONNA STICK WITH THAT DISGUISE?
I'M SORRY, BUT EVERY TIME I LOOK AT YOU I WANT TO LAUGH.
A BIG, BAD AGENT VENOM WALKING AROUND LOOKING LIKE OLD MOTHER HUBBARD.
DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, GRANNY, BUT I'D BET A SHRINK WOULD HAVE A FIELD DAY WITH YOU.
LORD OGRE'S CALLED OUT ONE HELLUVA MARKER, KATY.
EVERY PSYCHO, HITMAN, AND MERCENARY IN THE FREE WORLD IS TARGETING ME.
BEST IF VENOM STAYS OUT OF SIGHT FOR A WHILE.
AND AS LONG AS MY IDENTITY'S A SECRET, YOU DON'T GET TO SEE THE REAL ME.
NOTHING WRONG WITH PLAYING IT SAFE, AGENT VENOM
BUT YOU MIGHT WANT TO THINK ABOUT GIVING THE BAD GUYS SOMETHING TO GO AFTER.
MY GUESS IS THAT THE LAST THING YOU WANT IS A BUNCH OF DIRECTIONLESS KILLERS ROAMING PHILLY.
IN THE MEANTIME, LET'S TALK RESOURCES.
YOU NEED 'EM. I KNOW WHERE TO FIND 'EM.
SO CHEER UP...

"...YOUR SUPER HERO OPERATION IS ABOUT TO MOVE TO THE BIG LEAGUES."
MY NAME IS EUGENE "FLASH" THOMPSON.
AND AS OF TODAY I'M NO LONGER A SOLO ACT IN PHILLY.
KATY KIERNAN HAS CONTACTS... INFORMANTS... ASSETS...AND SHE'S SHARING THEM WITH ME.
LET'S FACE IT--THIS LONE WOLF BUSINESS ISN'T WORKING OUT.
I'M OUT HERE WITHOUT THE AID OF THE GOVERNMENT...WITHOUT THE AVENGERS...WITHOUT A SAFETY NET.
BAM
BAM
BAM
AND IF I'M GONNA BE THE HERO THE CITY DESERVES, THEN I NEED MY OWN NETWORK.
SPIES, ALLIES, FRIENDLIES...WHO MIGHT GIVE ME AN EDGE OVER THE BAD GUYS.
I NEED AN ACE OR TWO HIDDEN IN MY SYMBIOTIC SLEEVE.
SHZZIING
SHZZIING
BECAUSE I'M A LITTLE TIRED OF THE BAD GUYS--MEN LIKE LORD OGRE--HOLDING ALL THE CARDS.

I'LL ADMIT...IT'S A LITTLE SCARY...THE PEOPLE KATY KNOWS.
NEED INFORMATION ON BIGFOOT? YOU GOT IT. WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE MAYOR HAD FOR DINNER? NO WORRIES.
A SKRULL PARTICLE WEAPON? WHAT MAKE AND MODEL?
CASHIER
BIG DISCOUNT!
DOES SPIDEY WORK WITH THIS CALIBER OF PEOPLE?
PROBABLY NOT.
BUT I'M NOT THE SPIDER.
WE PLAY ON DIFFERENT FIELDS.
WE'RE PLAYING DIFFERENT GAMES ALTOGETHER.

HELL...I GREW UP IDOLIZING THE GUY...
...STILL DO...
...BUT I'LL NEVER GET THE HANG OF HOW HE DOES THINGS.
BANG
BANG
BANG
IT'S TIME TO STOP PRETENDING...
...AND START DOING THINGS MY WAY.
I'M A DIFFERENT KIND OF CREATURE...
...AND MY EYES AND EARS SPREAD THROUGH THE CITY...
...INFECTING IT...
...PHILLY IS MY HOST ORGANISM...
...AND I'M THE SYMBIOTE.

THWACK
NO TELLING HOW MANY HIRED GUNS LORD OGRE HAS BROUGHT INTO TOWN.
SEEMS LIKE THEY CRAWL OUT OF THE WOODWORK AT EVERY TURN.
ONE ASSASSIN MORE FREAKY THAN THE LAST.
LIKE THESE GUYS.
NINJAS...OR SOMETHING...WHO USE SHADOWS AS WEAPONS.
I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT'S NEXT.

COME ON!
BUY A VOWEL IF YOU NEED TO BUT-- COME ON!
THE ANSWER'S RIGHT THERE! RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOUR FACE!
I COULD'VE SOLVED THE PUZZLE THREE LETTERS AGO!
GETTING A LITTLE WORKED UP, AREN'T YOU, DAD?
IT'S JUST A GAME.
YOU KNOW... I'VE BEEN WATCHING THIS GAME... ALMOST EVERY NIGHT... SINCE LONG BEFORE YOU WERE BORN, MY DEAR.
NOW THERE'S AN ACCOMPLISHMENT.
I HOPE THAT'S ON YOUR RESUME.
OF COURSE.
IT'S LISTED RIGHT ALONGSIDE "SKILLED AT RAISING SMART-MOUTHED BRATS."
WHERE'RE YOU GOING? WANT ME TO PAUSE THIS?
NAH.
I'M GONNA GET SOME AIR.
BESIDES... I SOLVED THE PUZZLE FOUR LETTERS AGO.

COME ON!
SOLVE THE DAMN PUZZ--

SLAM

UH... MR. THOMPSON?
IT'S ANDI.
IF YOU HAVE A FEW MINUTES, I THINK WE NEED TO TALK--

...
"NEED TO TALK?"
THOSE'RE WORDS YOU *NEVER* WANT TO HEAR FROM YOUR DOCTOR, YOUR LAWYER, OR THE *DOE-EYED GIRLIE* WHO LIVES UPSTAIRS!

I'M AFRAID EUGENE ISN'T HOME RIGHT NOW.
BUT COME ON IN, "ANDI."
ANY TRUE CONFESSIONS YOU MIGHT WANT TO SHARE WITH "MR. THOMPSON," YOU CAN SHARE WITH GOOD OL' JACK O'LANTERN..
I'M A GOOD LISTENER.
BESIDES... I NEED TO LEAVE OUR CRIPPLED FRIEND A MESSAGE MYSELF...

...AND I'M GONNA WRITE IT IN YOUR BLOOD!
OOOOH. GONNA RUN, LITTLE RABBIT?
We wuv when they run!
We wuv when they scweam!
We wuv when they bweed!
UNF!
SHUNK!

DON'T PLAY HARD-TO-GET, GIRLIE!
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YER MISSING!
GONNA GIVE YOU THE FULL-SERVICE MUTILATION TREATMENT!
DAD!
AND!?
W-WHAT IS IT?
WHAT'S WRONG?
CALL 9-1-1!
BLAG
GET HELP!
GET SOMEBODY--
YOOOO HOOOOOO!

KNOCK KNOCK!
Who's dere?
BOOM
Who's dere?
GO... AND!...
TRY TO GET TO THE FIRE ESCAPE.
THE GANG'S ALL HERE, HUH?
GOOD... BECAUSE YOU AND I NEED TO CHAT, DADDY DEAREST.
I WANT TO EXPLAIN MY INTENTIONS WITH YOUR DAUGHTER.
WANT YOU TO CHOKE OUT A BLESSING BEFORE I START SLICING AND--

GET AWAY FROM THEM!
GGGKK!
KRASH
HOW IN THE @#$% DID JACK O'LANTERN GET OUT OF PRISON?
YOU'D THINK SOMEBODY MIGHT HAVE WARNED ME?
VRRRRRR
GUY'S THE WORST SORT OF MANIAC.
ALWAYS KNEW HE'D TURN UP AGAIN...ALWAYS KNEW HE'D TRY TO GET TO ME THROUGH THE PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT.

REAL @#$%@ MOVE, JACK.
GONNA PUT YOU DOWN ONCE AND FOR ALL!
CAN I JUST SAY ONE THING IN MY DEFENSE?
Party pooper!
What a buzzkill!
BAARRFFFOW!
SHZZIIING
RRRAAGGGH!
LET'S SEE IF THOSE FANCY DUDS OF YOURS CAN REGROW A HEAD.
RRRRR
Hot stuff coming thwough!
We wuv to burn you! To cut you!

HEY!
THWOP!
URRRK!
UNF!
THWACK
WHAT IS THIS? NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH?
ANDI'S LOVING POP COMING TO YOUR RESCUE?
BET THAT REALLY BURNS YOU UP, HUH, EUGENE?
DAD!
YOUR OWN DAD PRETTY MUCH HATED YOUR DRUNK, CRIPPLED ASS.
BET HE WOULDN'T HAVE LIFTED A FINGER TO HELP HIS OWN KID...LET ALONE A COMPLETE STRANGER...
THWPP! THWPP! SHWPP!
I MEAN...YOUR DADDY ISSUES RUN SO DEEP...YOU HAD TO MURDER MY FATHER.
THAT KIND OF THING LEFT ME WITH SOME REAL ANGER PROBLEMS, Y'KNOW?
TRYING TO HOLD HIM BACK...BUT HE'S TOO STRONG, MOVING TOO FAST.
TEARING AND SLIPPING OUT OF MY GRIP.
LEAVE THEM ALONE!
THIS IS BETWEEN YOU AND ME!
RRRRP! SHRRP!

JUST FOR A SECOND.
BUT A SECOND CHANGES EVERYTHING.
SORRY, EUGENE.
PAYBACK'S A BITCH.
HHHT!
DAD!
SSHHHHHHNNNNK
NOOOOO!
GOTTA EXPAND THE FAMILIAL PSYCHOSIS FOOTPRINT, AFTER ALL.
--KILL YOU!

SLAM
NNN
TK
TK
TK
TK
TK
TK
TK
TK
TK
NICE ONE, EUGENE. BUT YOU...GOTTA DO *BETTER*.
I HOPE...YOU REALIZE...I WOULDA KILLED YOU WITH OR WITHOUT THE BOUNTY LORD OGRE PUT ON YOUR HEAD.
THIS AIN'T ABOUT THE MONEY.
CHOMP
CHOMP
SNAP
MAYBE I'LL USE THE REWARD FOR CHARITY.
MAYBE I'LL DONATE TO AN ORPHAN'S FUND!

THE LANTERN'S TOYING WITH ME.
HERE, ANDI... CATCH!
WANTS TO SEE ME SUFFER.
SWOOSH
POISON GAS.
IF I KNOW JACK, IT'LL BE FAST-ACTING... PAINFUL...LETHAL.
TSSSSSSS
HE WANTS ME TO KNOW I CAN'T PROTECT THE PEOPLE AROUND ME.
WANTS ME TO KNOW...THEY'RE IN DANGER... BECAUSE OF ME.
COULDN'T SAVE ANDI'S DAD...
Kaff! *Koff!* *Kaff!*
...BUT I'M NOT GONNA LET HER DIE!
THE SYMBIOTE ACTS AS LIFE SUPPORT...
...FILTERING HAZARDS LIKE POISON FROM THE AIR.
IF I EXTEND PART OF VENOM TO ANDI, I MIGHT JUST--

--MAKE SOMETHING COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED HAPPEN.
UH...
...COACH?!
To Be Continued...

SYMBIWROTE

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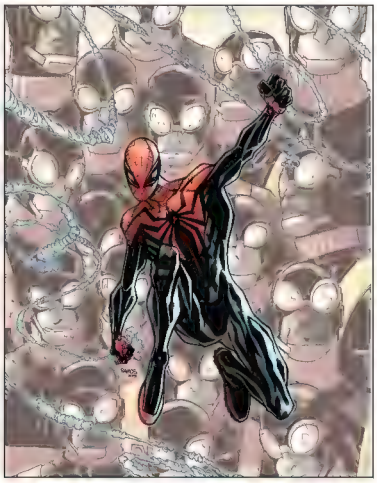
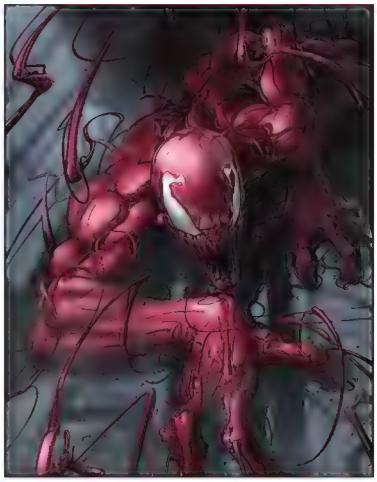


SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #14

SCARLET SPIDER #19



SUPERIOR CARNAGE #1

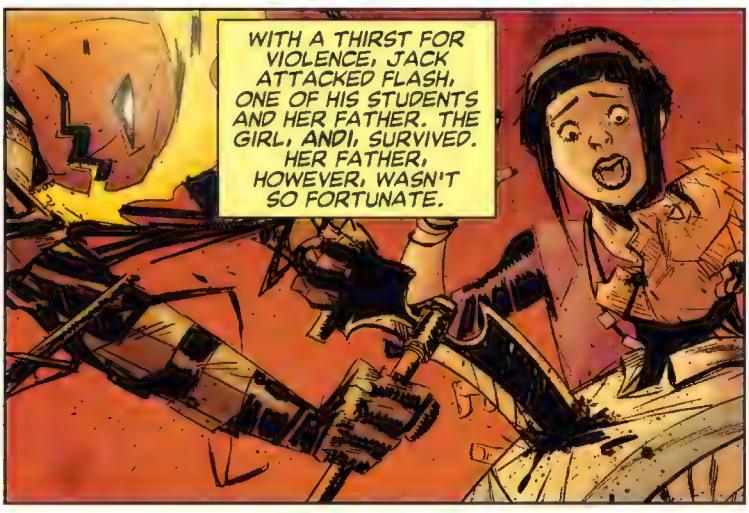
VENOM
MARVEL
BUNN
JACINTO
LOUGHRIDGE
039

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high school bully turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM

PREVIOUSLY...
FLASH THOMPSON IS LIVING AS A GYM TEACHER IN PHILADELPHIA-- WHERE THE LOCALS ARE FEELING ANYTHING BUT BROTHERLY.

THE MAN IN CHARGE OF THE CITY'S CRIMINAL UNDERWORLD? LORD OGRE, A DRUG DEALER AND HUMAN-TRAFFICKER WITH TIES TO SOME SERIOUS SUPER VILLAINY-- INCLUDING FLASH'S OLD FOE, JACK O'LANTERN.


WITH A THIRST FOR VIOLENCE, JACK ATTACKED FLASH, ONE OF HIS STUDENTS AND HER FATHER. THE GIRL, ANDI, SURVIVED. HER FATHER, HOWEVER, WASN'T SO FORTUNATE.

ACTING ON INSTINCT, FLASH SENT A PART OF THE VENOM SYMBIOTE TO PROTECT ANDI. THE SYMBIOTE HAS A MIND OF ITS OWN, THOUGH--AND IT SEEMS TO LIKE ITS NEW HOST!

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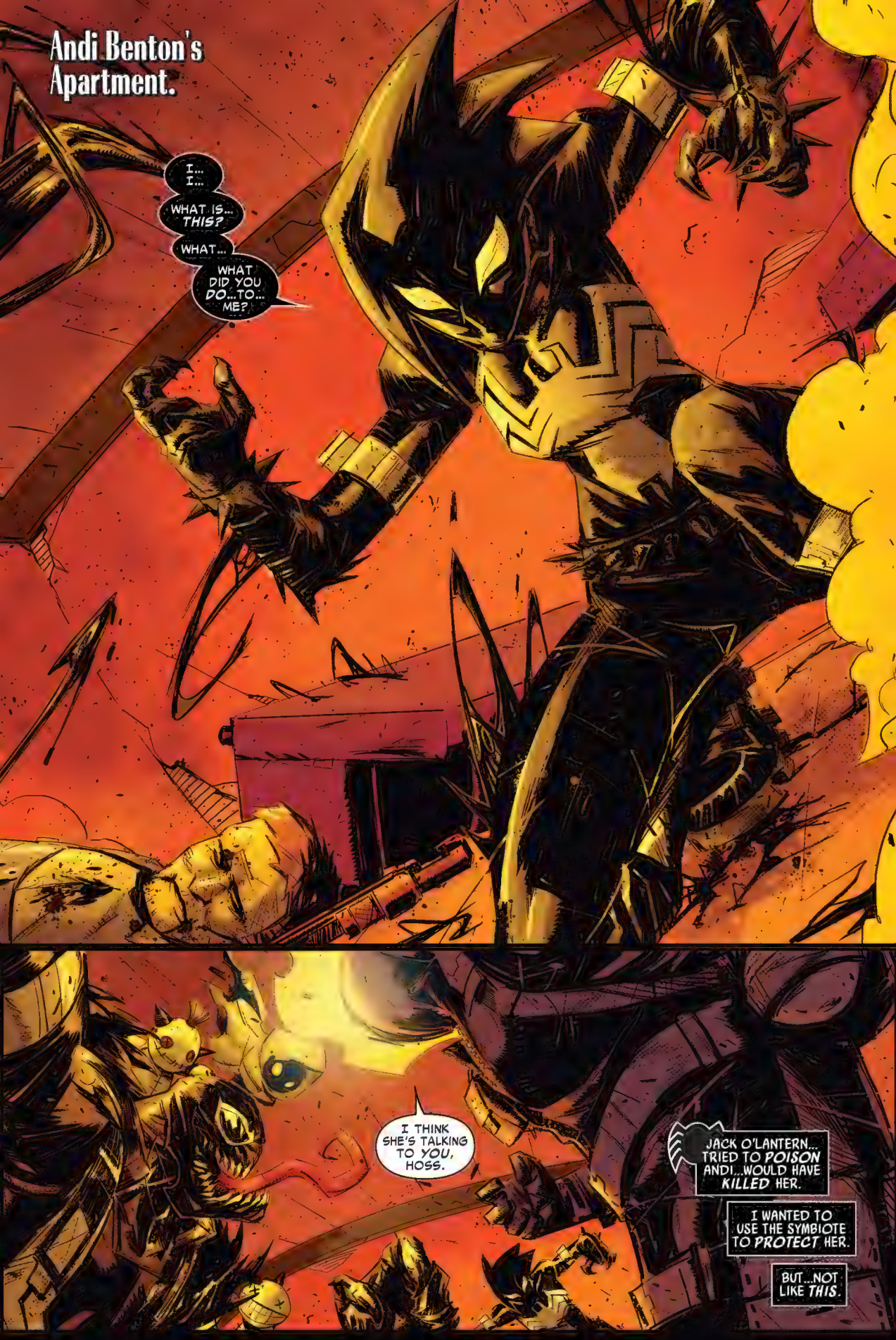
Andi Benton's Apartment.
I... I...
WHAT IS... THIS?
WHAT...
WHAT DID YOU DO... TO... ME?
I THINK SHE'S TALKING TO YOU, HOSS.
JACK O'LANTERN... TRIED TO POISON ANDI... WOULD HAVE KILLED HER.
I WANTED TO USE THE SYMBIOTE TO PROTECT HER.
BUT... NOT LIKE THIS.

ACTED ON INSTINCT.
BUT THE SYMBIOTE'S BEEN TWITCHY LATELY.
DAD?
NO...THAT'S NOT RIGHT. THE SYMBIOTE'S NOT SOME HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCE.
YOU... MURDERED HIM.
IT'S ALIVE. IT HAS A MIND OF ITS OWN.
IT'S UNPREDICTABLE.
TRY AS I MIGHT, I CAN'T CONTROL IT.
I'M...
...GONNA...
SGGKGGLK
KILL YOU!
TH-THWOK!

HRRRRGG
You're mean!
Leave Wacky-Jacky alone!
FWOOSH!
GET OFF!
I'm gonna thwow up!
LET'S JUST TURN THIS 'OLE PUMPKIN AROUND.
AHH! BETTER!
GOTTA BE ABLE TO SEE WHO I'M KILL--

KILL THIS!
WHOMP!
THE LANTERN'S A WALKING, TALKING NIGHTMARE.
RRRGG
THE BLOOD ON HIS HANDS WILL NEVER COME CLEAN.
IF HE GOES BACK TO PRISON...HE'S JUST GOING TO BREAK OUT AGAIN... KILL AGAIN.
NOT GONNA HAPPEN.
KRASH
HE'S FINISHED.
ONCE AND FOR ALL.

BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LET ANDI KILL HIM.
JACK IS MY RESPONSIBILITY, NOT HERS.
HRRRNF!
SLAM!
I'M THE SOLDIER. I MAKE THE TOUGH CALLS.
SHE'S JUST A GIRL. SHE'S NOT A--
--KILLER.
RRAAAAGHH!
GET OFF!
ANDI! NO!
LET GO!

GET OFF ME!
LET ME KILL THIS PIECE OF @#$%!
THAT'S NOT GONNA HAPPEN!
CALM DOWN!
LOOK AT HIM!
LOOK AT HIM!
THAT'S...
THAT'S NOT JACK O'LANTERN!
BUT HOW--
WHO THE @#$% ARE YOU?
HOW DID YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
HOW DID YOU FIND ME?
DON'T YOU GET IT, EUGENE?
YOU'RE NEVER GONNA SLIP AWAY FROM US.
YOU CAN'T RUN FAR ENOUGH OR FAST ENOUGH.
YOU CAN'T HIDE BEHIND A MASK OR BOTTLE OR A TEACHING POSITION.
NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, YOU'RE GONNA PAY FOR YOUR SINS.
WE'RE JACK, BABY... AND WE'RE EVERYWHERE!

"O' COURSE, JUST A FEW WEEKS AGO, I WAS JUST A NOBODY.
"WORKING AT A STORAGE FACILITY, DAY IN AND DAY OUT.
E 02
E 01
"I DIDN'T HAVE A CLUE THAT JACK--THE REAL JACK, WHO'S STILL COOLING HIS HEELS IN PRISON--HAD LEFT ME A LITTLE SURPRISE IN ONE OF THE UNITS."
Help me... help...pwease help me...
E 40-50
Pwlease help me... help...save me...
SNAP
Oh, my hewo!
Wook into my eyes!
"MY HEAD...USELESS AS IT WAS UP UNTIL THAT MOMENT... WAS SUDDENLY PACKED WITH ALL THE GOOD STUFF...
"ALL THE JUICY LITTLE MORSELS THAT THE REAL JACK HAD RECORDED BEFORE BEING APPREHENDED.
"THIS MEAT SACK'S WEAK LITTLE MIND WAS OVERWRITTEN SO JACK'S GOOD WORK COULD CONTINUE."

AND BY "GOOD WORK" I MEAN THE WHOLESALE SLAUGHTER OF EVERY BANAL LITTLE LAMB WHO JUST MEWLS THROUGH THE DAY-TO-DAY GRIND.
AND-- OF COURSE-- REVENGE FOR THE SENSELESS MURDER OF MY DAD.
HMM. WHO DID THAT AGAIN?
OH, YEAH-- YOU.
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH. TIME TO--
NO!
DON'T YOU SEE? THIS GUY'S A VICTIM.
HE KILLED MY DAD!
HE'S BEEN HYPNOTIZED OR MIND-CONTROLLED OR WHATEVER.
THE REAL GUY... HE NEVER WANTED THIS.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I WAS FORCED INTO MY LITTLE PREDICAMENT, GIRL.
A LOT LIKE YOU WERE FORCED INTO YOURS.
BUT I GOTTA TELL YA...
...IT HURTS SO GOOD!
HE'S GETTING AWAY!
CRASH

I'M WRONG. AGAIN.
SHOCKER.
IN EVERY WAY THAT MATTERS, THIS GUY IS JACK O'LANTERN.
THAT MEANS HE'LL LEAVE A BODY COUNT ANYWHERE HE GOES.
NO TIME TO WAIT.
NO TIME TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON WITH ANDI.
THERE'S NO TELLING HOW MANY PEOPLE MIGHT DIE IF I DON'T BRING HIM DOWN.

FIRST I WANT TO KILL HIM... THEN I DON'T... THEN I WANT TO.
I DUNNO.
MAKE A DECISION, THOMPSON!
HOLD ON! WAIT FOR ME!
I CAN'T LET YOU COME WITH ME, ANDI.
AS IF I HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT THE RIGHT DECISION MIGHT BE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
HE'S GETTING AWAY!
THE GUY WHO KILLED MY DAD IS SLIPPING RIGHT THROUGH YOUR FINGERS!
AND YOU CAN'T STOP ME!
YEAH. I CAN.
GOTTA MAKE THE RIGHT CALL HERE.
WE CAN SORT EVERYTHING OUT LATER.
FOR NOW, YOU JUST NEED TO WAIT THIS OUT... SOMEWHERE SAFE.
A TEENAGER RUNNING AROUND WEARING A PIECE OF THE VENOM SYMBIOTE.
SHE'LL GET HERSELF KILLED.
NOT IF I CALL IT BACK--

ARE YOU DONE?
DIDN'T WORK.
COULDN'T RETRIEVE THE SYMBIOTE.
BUT IT'S JUST A SATELLITE, A FRAGMENT. THE BOND SHOULDN'T BE...
...PERMANENT.
WHATEVER THAT WAS--
--DON'T--
--TRY IT AGAIN!
AND GET OUT OF MY WAY.
THE STRENGTH, THE SPEED, THE AGILITY...
...THE WEB-SLINGING...THE POWERS...
...SHE ADAPTED SO QUICKLY, LIKE SHE'S BEEN WEARING THE SYMBIOTE FOR YEARS INSTEAD OF MINUTES.
SHE'S A NATURAL.
HOW IS SHE A NATURAL?

THIS ISN'T GONNA END WELL.
YEEAARGH!
SHRAK
UNNF!
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?

THIS AIN'T VENOM.
IT'S LIKE... SOME KID DRESSED AS VENOM.
THOSE'RE GOOD EYES YOU'VE GOT THERE, CONSTRICTOR.
BUT THIS IS THE NEXT BEST THING.
THIS IS VENOM'S LITTLE SIDEKICK.
IT'S COOL.
YOU CAN KILL HER.
FIRST OF ALL, LET'S GET SOMETHING CLEAR.
I DON'T WORK FOR YOU, SO DON'T TELL ME WHO I CAN AND CAN'T ICE.
SECOND OF ALL, I MIGHT BE A BAD GUY, BUT I AIN'T GONNA HURT A KID.
AND I WON'T LET YOU DO IT, EITHER.
OKAY... I ADMIRE A GUY WITH PRINCIPLES.
BUT...
-TSK-
YOU SHOULDA TOLD HIM THAT.

GET AWAY FROM HER!
RRRULLINNN!
WOOOMPFF!
LORD OGRE...THE LOCAL CRIME LORD...HIRED--I DUNNO--A COUPLE DOZEN ASSASSINS TO TAKE ME OUT OF THE PICTURE.
ALL OF YOU--
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
KTING
KTING
KTING
--BACK OFF!
JACK O'LANTERN LED US STRAIGHT INTO THEIR WAITING ARMS.

WATCH OUT!
FWWUMP!
NICE SAVE.
THANKS.
NO PROBLEM, COACH.
WRACK!
REEAAKK!
ISN'T THAT SWEET! THE STUDENT BECOMES THE TEACHER!
BUT THIS IS THE PART OF THE MOVIE WHERE MR. MIYAGI GETS HIS HEAD LOPPED OFF AND HIS BRAINS SCOOPED OUT!

THAT'S HOW THE MOVIE ENDS, RIGHT?
WOOOFF!
SLAM!
ANDI'S HIGH ON THE SYMBIOTE'S POWER.
IT'S FUELING HER ANGER...
...USING RAW EMOTION TO CEMENT THE BOND BETWEEN THEM...
...URGING HER TO SEAL THE DEAL...
...IN BLOOD.

GRRKKGGGLK!
AND!--
--DON'T!
DON'T DO THIS!
SHE'S NOT GONNA LISTEN.
YOU GO DOWN THIS PATH...
...THERE'S NO COMING BACK.
NOT LIKE THE SUIT EVER LISTENED TO ME.
NOT LIKE I EVER LISTENED MYSELF.
GNNGGK
WHY? WHY'D YOU DO THIS TO ME?
THIS GUY DOESN'T DESERVE ANOTHER SECOND ON EARTH!
NOT IF MY DAD DOESN'T GET ONE!
WHY'D YOU GIVE ME THIS POWER IF YOU DIDN'T WANT ME TO USE IT?
I WAS TRYING TO PROTECT YOU.
AND...NOT GONNA LIE...IF I COULD TAKE THAT SYMBIOTE BACK, I WOULD.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED... WHAT WENT WRONG...
BUT I DO KNOW WEARING THAT SUIT COMES WITH A COST.
IF YOU LET ME, I'LL SHOULDER SOME OF THE BURDEN WITH YOU.

BUT IF YOU KILL HIM...WHETHER HE DESERVES IT OR NOT...YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN.
EVEN IF YOU HAD THE WORLD ON YOUR SIDE...YOU'LL BE ALONE.
I'M TELLING YOU... I KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
COME ON, KID.
MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE.
AND I...I PROMISE YOU... WE'LL FIGURE THIS OUT.
ALL OF IT.
BUT FOR NOW...
FEEE-OOO-REEEE-O
"...IT'S TIME TO GET GONE."

TOOK A FEW DAYS FOR THINGS TO SETTLE DOWN.
CAN'T SAY THAT ANYTHING'S BACK TO NORMAL, THOUGH.
NOT SURE I'VE EVER SEEN THE RIGHT SIDE OF NORMAL.
BUT I DO MY BEST TO FAKE IT...
...ALONE
AFTER HER FATHER'S FUNERAL, ANDI MOVED IN WITH HER AUNT IN JENKINTOWN.
WE KEEP IN TOUCH, OF COURSE.
ONE OF MY NEW SUPPLIERS HOOKED US UP WITH UNTRACEABLE STARKPHONES.
THINK OF THEM AS THE VENOM-HOTLINE.

I'VE GOT MY EAR TO THE GROUND.
CONTACTS DIGGING UP EVERYTHING THEY CAN ON LORD OGRE'S OPERATION.
THE ASSASSINS HE HIRED AREN'T TALKING. THEY MUST'VE BEEN PAID WELL FOR THEIR SILENCE.
AND THE...FAKE... JACK SLIPPED INTO A COMA NOT LONG AFTER BEING TAKEN INTO CUSTODY.
BRAIN DEAD. APPARENTLY, JACK GIVES AND TAKES AWAY.
I'VE ASKED ANDI TO KEEP HER COOL...TO LAY LOW UNTIL I CAN FIGURE OUT HER...
...SITUATION.
I DON'T THINK SHE'S REALLY HONORING THE AGREEMENT, THOUGH. SHE KEEPS BUSY.
IN THE UNANSWERED QUESTIONS DEPARTMENT, I'M NECK DEEP.
HOW DID MY SYMBIOTE SPAWN ANOTHER LIKE THAT?
AND HOW DID ANDI GET UP TO SPEED SO QUICKLY?
I THINK I KNOW WHO TO ASK.
BUT HE'S NOT TALKING.
YET.
The End.

SYMBIWROTE

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Venom-ites! As it goes in comics, with the conclusion of one story we begin another! "Jack O'Lantern" may have been taken care of, but Lord Ogre is still out there—and that's just one part of what we've got planned next. Why is Andi so connected with the symbiote? And who is Flash going after next? We'll tell you in September!

In other news, Kim Jacinto's kinetic and mesmerizing stylings come to a close with this issue, but we're coming back with Jorge Coelho, who delivers a visual punch you'll be asking for more of. Before we jump ahead though, on to your letters!

I am a brand new Venom reader. Issue 36 was my first experience with this title, and when I finished with that I was ready for #37. After issue 37, I am now subscribing, and I am very excited to see what the future holds for Flash as he continues his crusade to bring the evil-doers in Philadelphia to justice. By the way, that last page of issue 37 was simply amazing. So awesome... Keep up the good work on this series! Can't wait for #38!
Trevor Sherman

Welcome aboard, Trevor. Issue 36, was actually my first issue of Venom too—at the editorial helm that is! Glad you're enjoying it fellow-newbie (and thanks for the ego-boost!)

Whatsup!! I just finished reading Venom issue 37, and I had a pretty cool idea. You should make it so Lord Ogre has some affiliation with Flash Thompson (not Venom). Like it would be soo sick if we found out that he is Andi's dad!! You guys could write sooo much based off of that! Like say Venom kills Lord Ogre, and it kinda knows Flash is Venom, then she hates him. Or maybe she could help take him down. And another thing, how come there are no letters printed in the back of the book? It would totally be sick if you guys printed this! Haha especially since it's my first letter ever. Well, I enjoy reading the book, and I hope you guys have even more fun making it. Can't wait for issue 38! Peace Out!!!
Clayton Walker

We didn't print any letters because we were waiting for YOU, so congrats, you made the cut, Clayton. Great ideas, but Cullen has a few other tricks his sleeve, which I have a feeling you'll really enjoy, too.

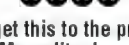
HA! The Venom-Mobile!?! That was simply inspired. I'm an old time reader and I still remember getting Amazing Spider-Man #300 when I was a kid, so I'm not new to Venom, but I am new to Flash Thompson as Venom. I just started reading the current Venom series and I really like what I've seen. Flash seems to be using the Venom symbiote in new and exciting ways. The last time I was this excited about Venom was when I read What If? #44 What If Venom Had Possessed the Punisher. In that story the Punisher learns how to use the symbiote to shoot bullets instead of webbing. The Venom-Mobile topped that by a mile. I missed the first 33 issues of this current series (hopefully I'll be able to find them collected in a trade paperback somewhere) so I don't know if Flash has been doing things like this all along, but when I saw the Venom-Mobile I was hooked. This has the potential to make Venom the coolest hero ever. What are the limits of this ability? Come on Cullen Bunn, I dare you to make Flash Thompson one of the most epic heroes in the Marvel Universe. I just want to sit shotgun in the Venom-Mobile as you do it.
Shayne Olson

I gotta say, the Venom-mobile is one of my favorite parts, too. That's just how crazed Cullen's mind is... and it gets wilder.

I just moved from Queens, NY to Philly and I was excited to see that my favorite character moved to Philly with me! It was tough for Flash and me to leave Peter Parker in Queens, but we are making the same adjustments as we are both new to the City of Neighborhoods. I look forward to seeing Venom as well as the monuments that make Philly famous in the upcoming issues.

Eric

Great! Flash could probably use a tour guide, Eric if you're interested. He's being totally boring and only beating up bad guys. I mean, at least go eat a cheesesteak!



GAH! Gotta get this to the printer! See you next month, Marvelites!

Sana

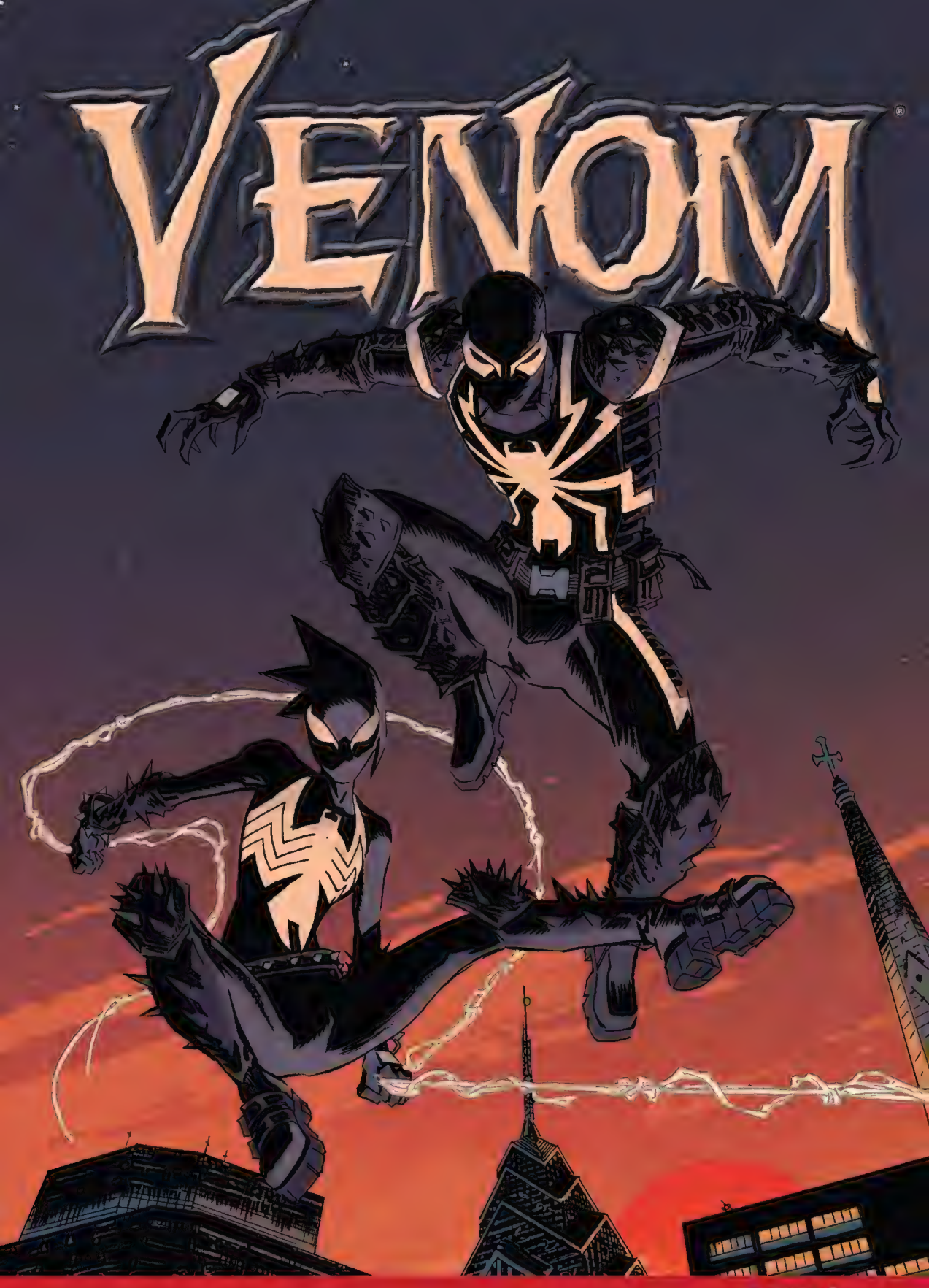
NEXT!

ALSO:

SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #16

DAREDEVIL #30

MORBIUS THE LIVING VAMPIRE #8



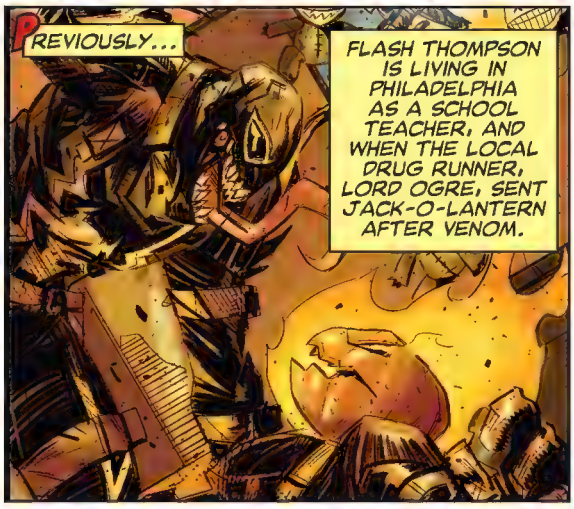
MARVEL

BUNN
COELHO
LOUGHRIDGE

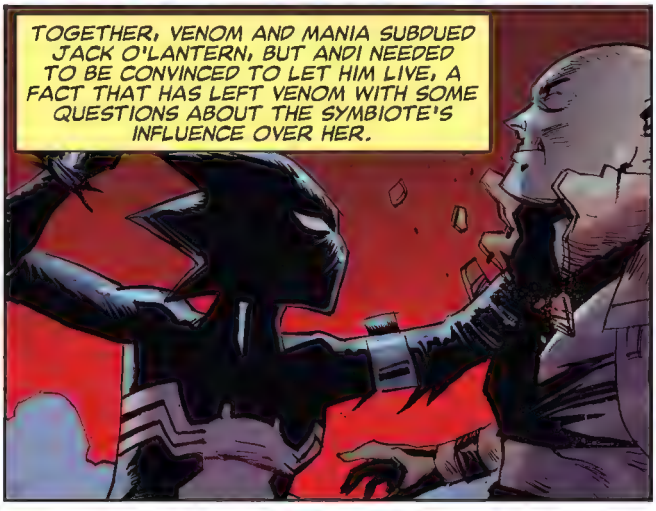
040

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high school bully turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM


PREVIOUSLY...
FLASH THOMPSON IS LIVING IN PHILADELPHIA AS A SCHOOL TEACHER, AND WHEN THE LOCAL DRUG RUNNER, LORD OGRE, SENT JACK-O-LANTERN AFTER VENOM.

ONE OF FLASH'S STUDENTS, ANDI, AND HER FATHER WERE PUT IN HARM'S WAY. ANDI SURVIVED, BUT HER FATHER DIDN'T. ACTING ON INSTINCT, FLASH SENT THE SYMBIOTE TO HEAL AND PROTECT HER. INSTEAD, THE TWO BONDED--CREATING MANIA!


TOGETHER, VENOM AND MANIA SUBDUED JACK O'LANTERN, BUT ANDI NEEDED TO BE CONVINCED TO LET HIM LIVE, A FACT THAT HAS LEFT VENOM WITH SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SYMBIOTE'S INFLUENCE OVER HER.

FLASH HAS KEPT A WATCHFUL EYE ON MANIA WHILE SHE HAS STARTED TO COMBAT CRIME AROUND PHILADELPHIA. HE STILL NEEDS ANSWERS, THOUGH--AND THE SYMBIOTE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS THEM.

MANIA part 1 of 3

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JORGE COELHO artist

LEE LOUGHRIDGE color art

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA letters

DECLAN SHALVEY & JORDIE BELLAIRE cover art

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AXEL ALONSO editor in chief

JOE QUESADA chief creative officer

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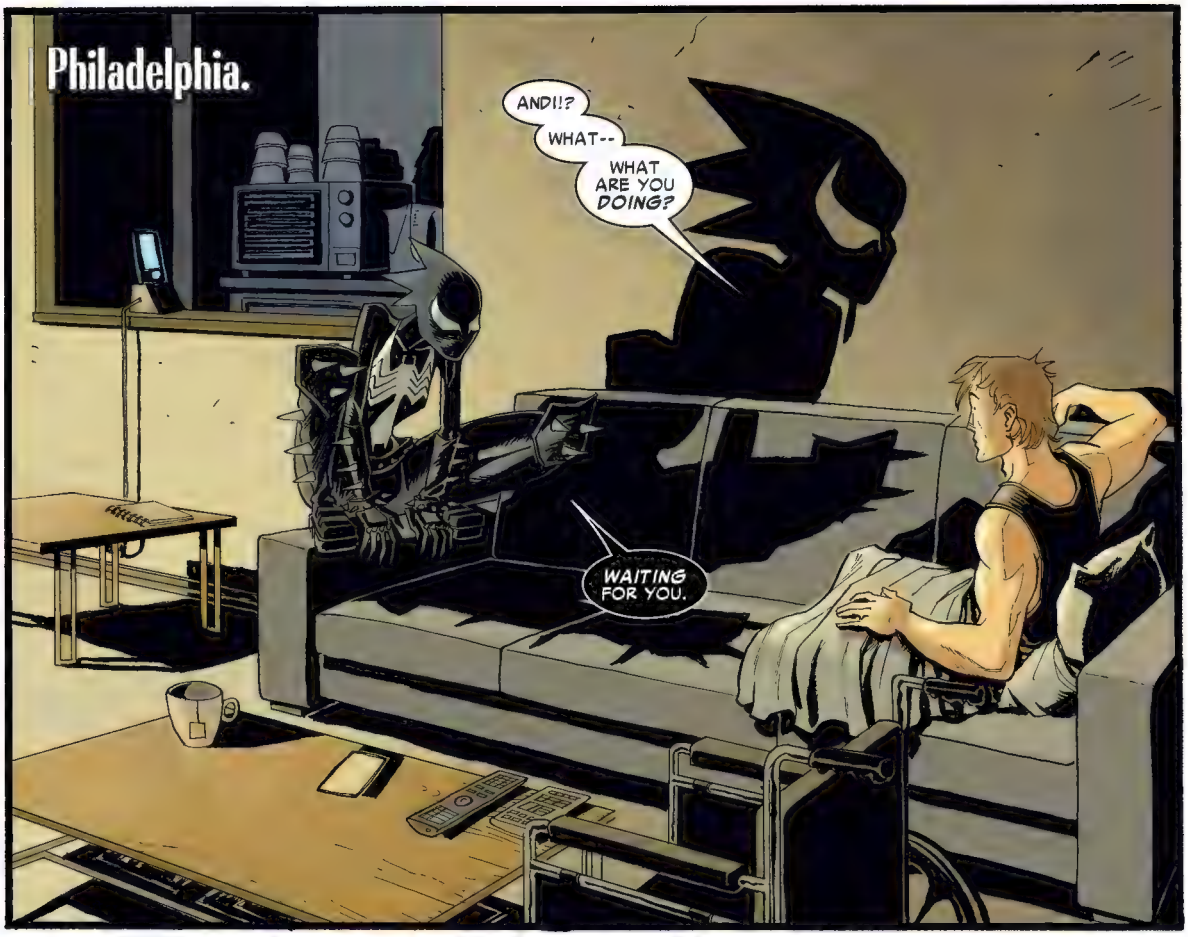
A MAN GETS BEATEN TO DEATH IN AN ALLEY.
WHEN HE STEPPED INTO THE DARKNESS DID HE KNOW HE WAS GOING TO DIE?
DID HE WANT TO MEET HIS END RATHER THAN FACE WHAT THE WORLD MIGHT BECOME?
IF I HAD BEEN THERE TO SAVE HIM, WOULD HE THANK ME?
OR WOULD HE SPIT IN MY EYE AND CURSE ME FOR INTERFERING?
IF HE DIDN'T WANT TO DIE, HE WOULD HAVE FOUGHT BACK, RIGHT?
RAGE.
"RAGE AGAINST THE DYING OF THE LIGHT."
OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
IF HE FOUGHT BACK, WOULD ANYONE TAKE NOTICE?
OR WOULD HIS SACRIFICE BE MORE NOTEWORTHY?
NO.
THE WORLD DOESN'T NOTICE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.

THE WORLD'S GOT *BIGGER PROBLEMS* TO WORRY ABOUT.

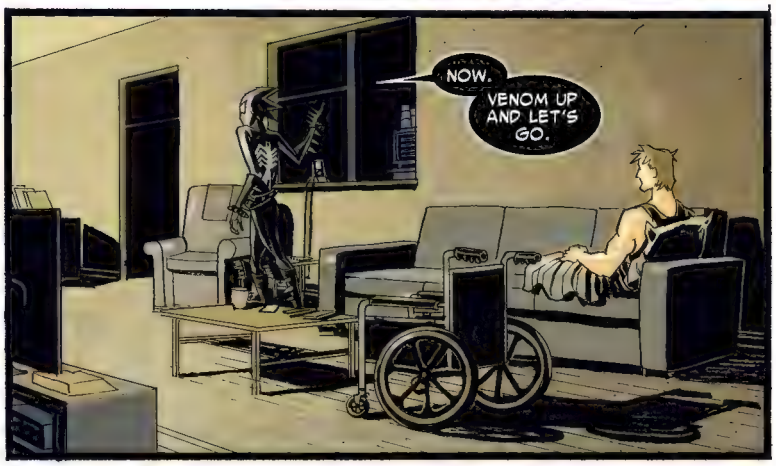
WHU--

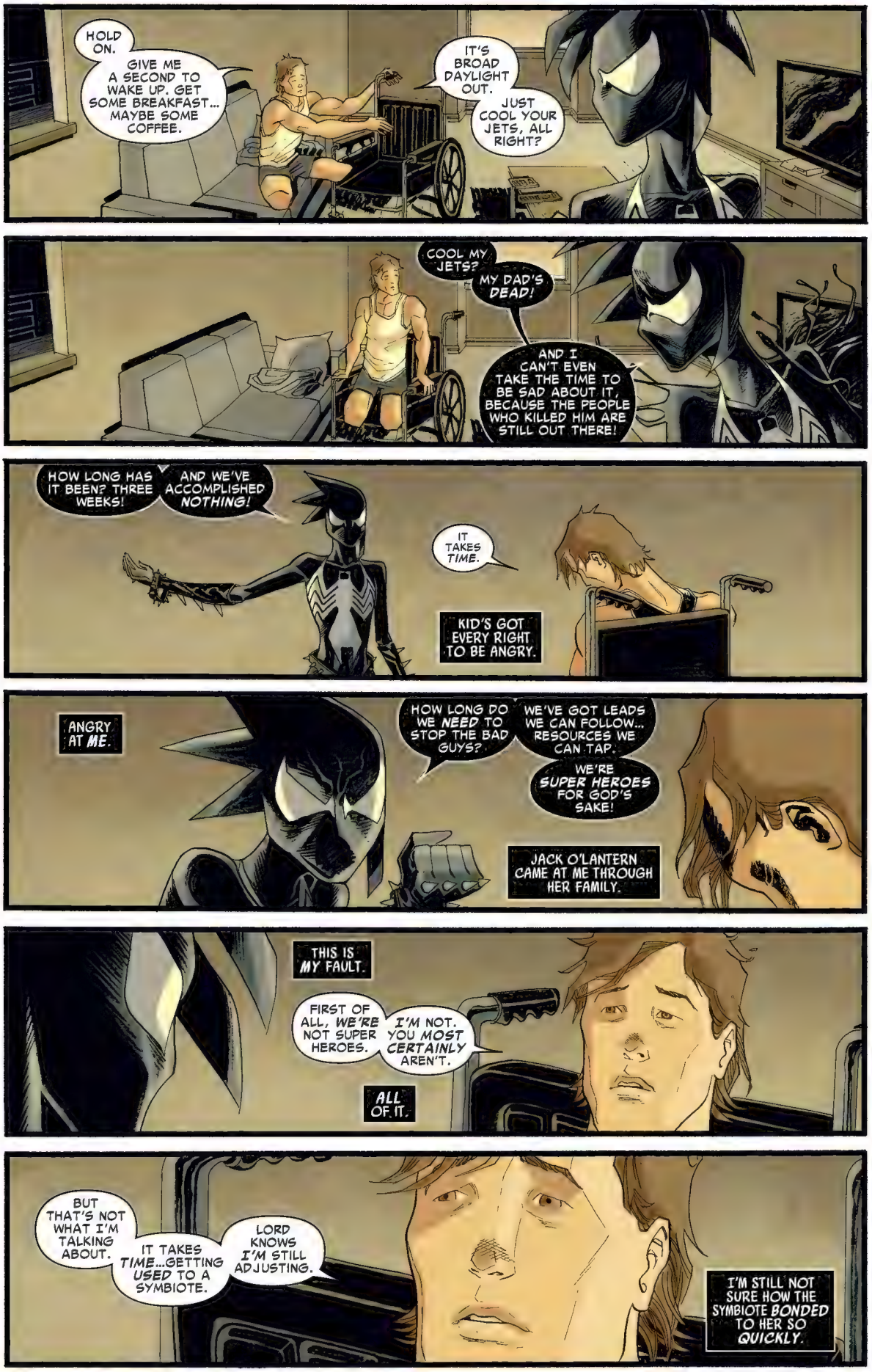
WHU--


Philadelphia.
AND!?
WHAT--
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WAITING FOR YOU.

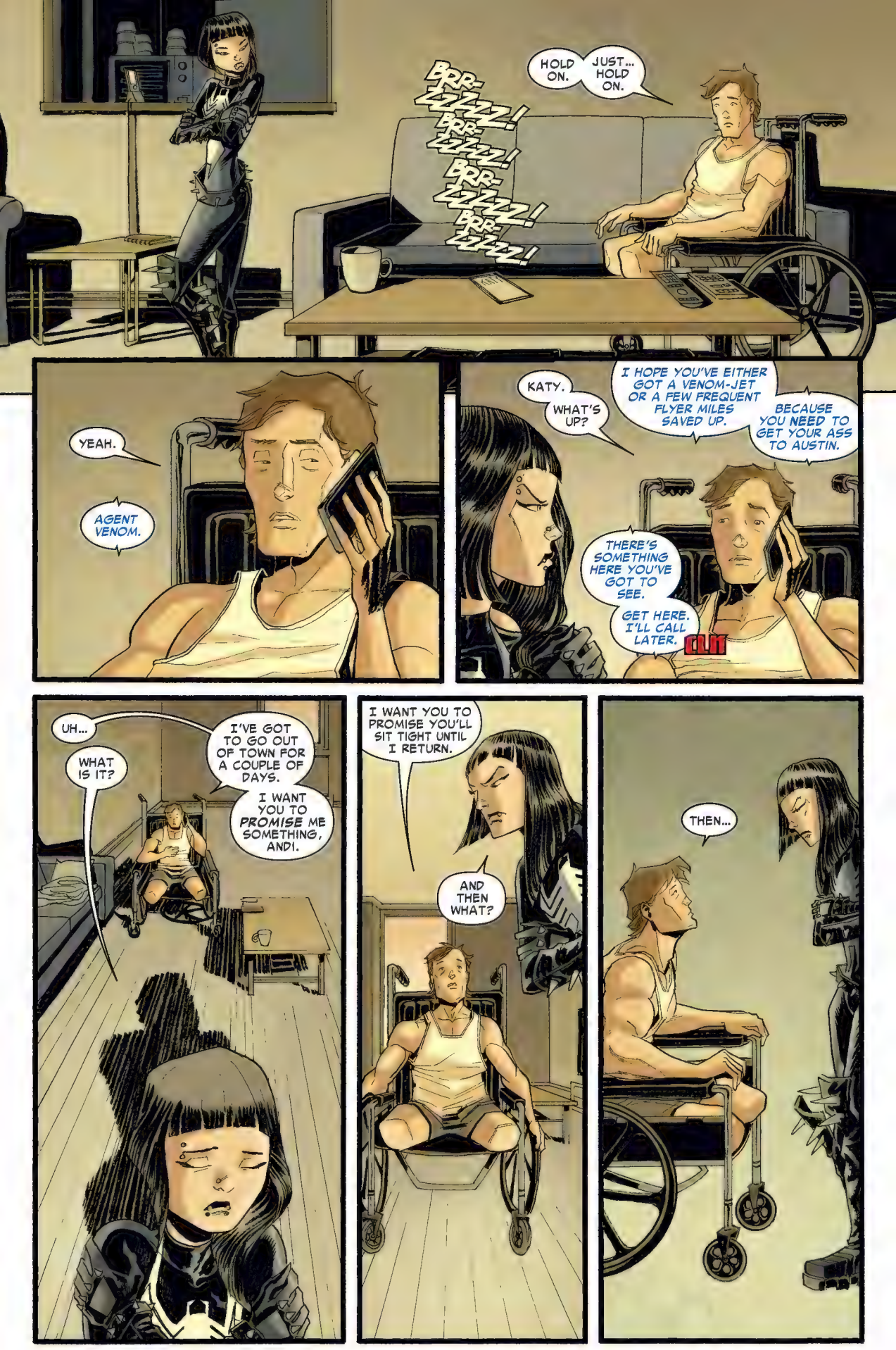
YEAH... OKAY.
IT'S JUST...
...Y'KNOW...
...A LITTLE WEIRD.

OH?
DID I FREAK YOU OUT, COACH THOMPSON?
WAKE YOU FROM A PLEASANT DREAM?
SORRY ABOUT THAT, SLEEPING BEAUTY.

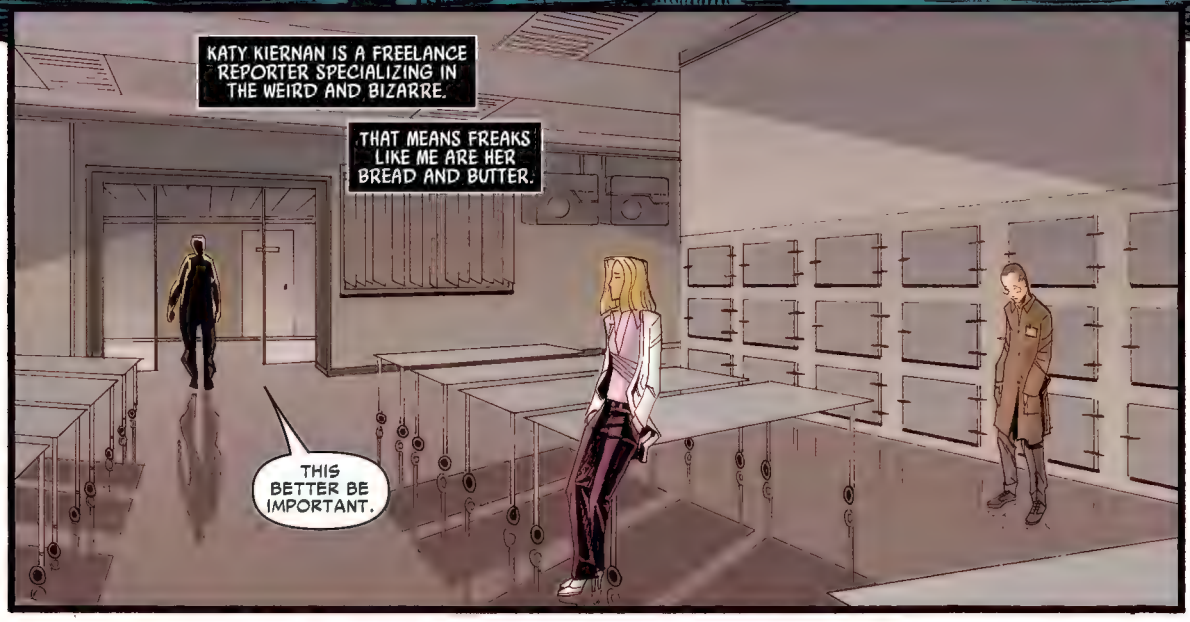

NOW.
VENOM UP AND LET'S GO.


HOLD ON.
GIVE ME A SECOND TO WAKE UP. GET SOME BREAKFAST... MAYBE SOME COFFEE.
IT'S BROAD DAYLIGHT OUT.
JUST COOL YOUR JETS, ALL RIGHT?
COOL MY JETS?
MY DAD'S DEAD!
AND I CAN'T EVEN TAKE THE TIME TO BE SAD ABOUT IT, BECAUSE THE PEOPLE WHO KILLED HIM ARE STILL OUT THERE!
HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN? THREE WEEKS!
AND WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING!
IT TAKES TIME.
KID'S GOT EVERY RIGHT TO BE ANGRY.
ANGRY AT ME.
HOW LONG DO WE NEED TO STOP THE BAD GUYS?
WE'VE GOT LEADS WE CAN FOLLOW... RESOURCES WE CAN TAP.
WE'RE SUPER HEROES FOR GOD'S SAKE!
JACK O'LANTERN CAME AT ME THROUGH HER FAMILY.
THIS IS MY FAULT.
FIRST OF ALL, WE'RE NOT SUPER HEROES.
I'M NOT. YOU MOST CERTAINLY AREN'T.
ALL OF IT.
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
IT TAKES TIME...GETTING USED TO A SYMBIOTE.
LORD KNOWS I'M STILL ADJUSTING.
I'M STILL NOT SURE HOW THE SYMBIOTE BONDED TO HER SO QUICKLY.

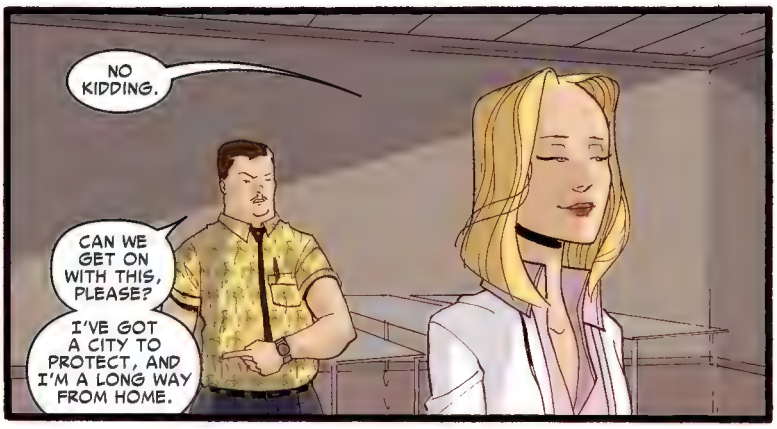
THE CONNECTION FORMED FAST--
I GET IT.
I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU WANT TO FIND LORD OGRE AND--
KILL HIM.
--AGGRESSIVELY.
THAT DOESN'T EVEN SOUND LIKE YOU.
I WAS TRYING TO PROTECT HER...NOT CREATE--
--WHATEVER IT IS SHE'S BECOME.
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I'M SUPPOSED TO SOUND!
YOU BARELY EVEN KNOW ME!
YOU'RE RIGHT.
BUT I KNOW SYMBIOTES.
AND I MIGHT BE IN OVER MY HEAD HERE.
THIS HUNGER FOR REVENGE...
...THIS MANIA...
...THAT SEEMS LESS LIKE THE GIRL I THINK I KNOW AND MORE LIKE A SYMBIOTE.
WELL...
...MAYBE THE SYMBIOTE UNDERSTANDS ME BETTER THAN YOU DO.

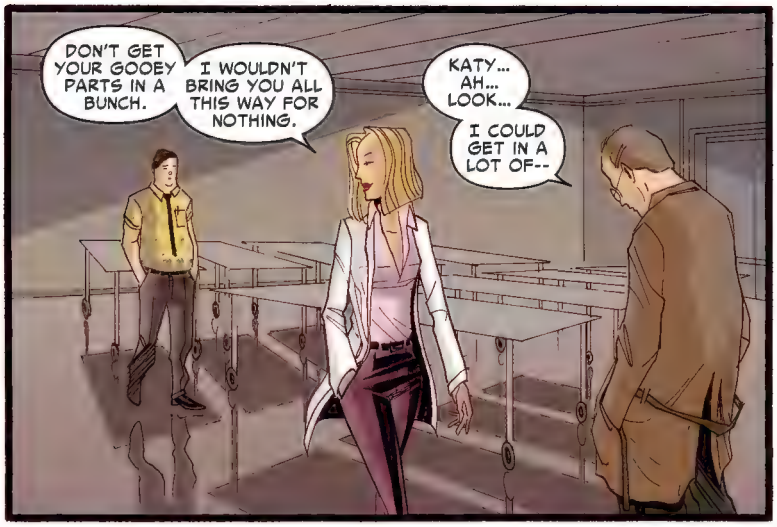

HOLD ON.
JUST... HOLD ON.
BRR-ZZZZZ!
BRR-ZZZZZ!
BRR-ZZZZZ!
BRR-ZZZZZ!
YEAH.
AGENT VENOM.
KATY.
WHAT'S UP?
I HOPE YOU'VE EITHER GOT A VENOM-JET OR A FEW FREQUENT FLYER MILES SAVED UP.
BECAUSE YOU NEED TO GET YOUR ASS TO AUSTIN.
THERE'S SOMETHING HERE YOU'VE GOT TO SEE.
GET HERE. I'LL CALL LATER.
CLIT
UH...
WHAT IS IT?
I'VE GOT TO GO OUT OF TOWN FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS.
I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME SOMETHING, ANDI.
I WANT YOU TO PROMISE YOU'LL SIT TIGHT UNTIL I RETURN.
AND THEN WHAT?
THEN...

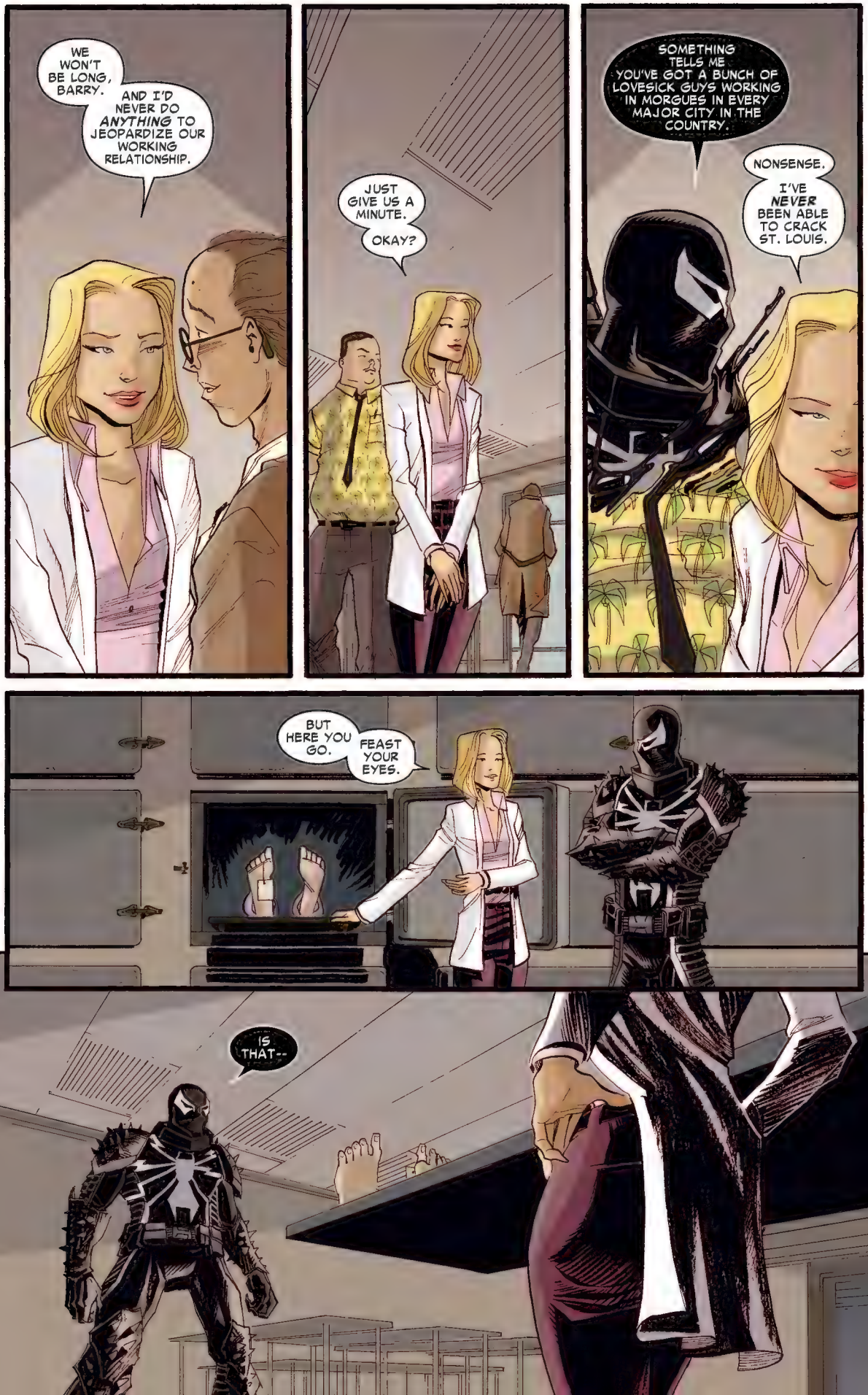
"...WE'LL TAKE LORD OGRE DOWN ONCE AND FOR ALL.
"TOGETHER."
Austin, Texas.

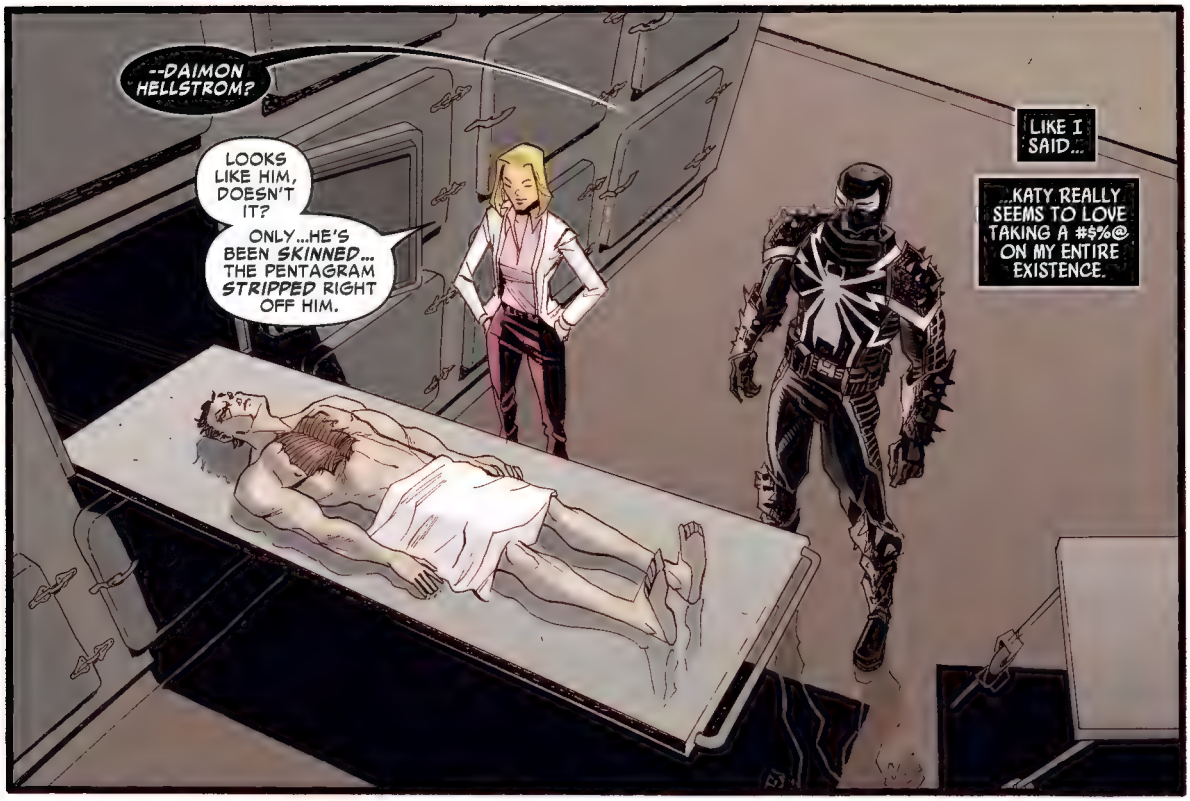

KATY KIERNAN IS A FREELANCE REPORTER SPECIALIZING IN THE WEIRD AND BIZARRE.
THAT MEANS FREAKS LIKE ME ARE HER BREAD AND BUTTER.
THIS BETTER BE IMPORTANT.

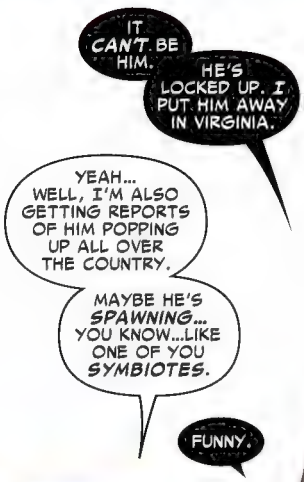
WE HAVE AN... UNDERSTANDING.
MEANING SHE TAKES GREAT DELIGHT IN SHOWING ME THINGS THAT SIMPLY RUIN MY DAY.
AGENT VENOM?
THAT'S AN INTERESTING LOOK FOR YOU.
IT'S A DISGUISE.

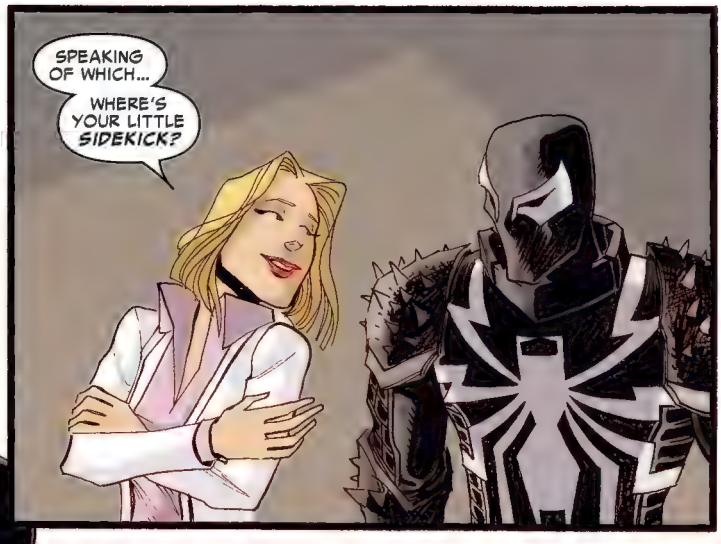

NO KIDDING.
CAN WE GET ON WITH THIS, PLEASE?
I'VE GOT A CITY TO PROTECT, AND I'M A LONG WAY FROM HOME.

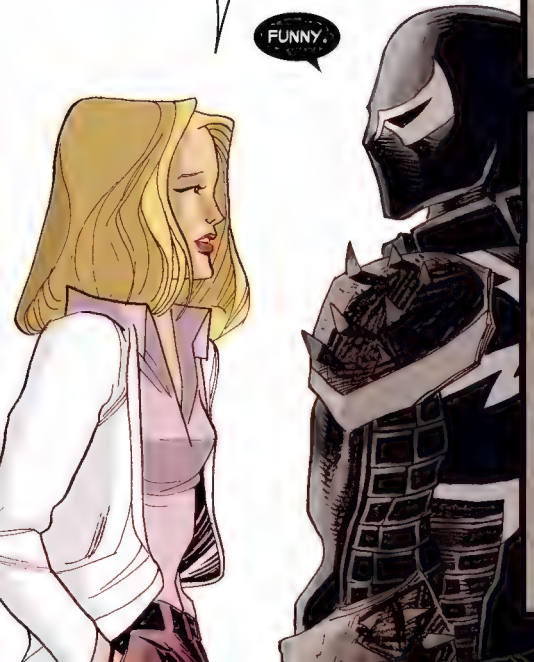

DON'T GET YOUR GOOEY PARTS IN A BUNCH.
I WOULDN'T BRING YOU ALL THIS WAY FOR NOTHING.
KATY... AH... LOOK...
I COULD GET IN A LOT OF--

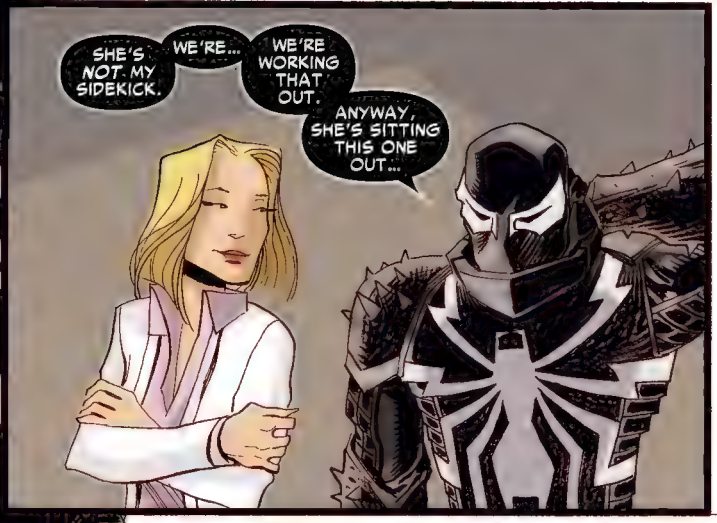

WE WON'T BE LONG, BARRY.
AND I'D NEVER DO ANYTHING TO JEOPARDIZE OUR WORKING RELATIONSHIP.
JUST GIVE US A MINUTE.
OKAY?
SOMETHING TELLS ME YOU'VE GOT A BUNCH OF LOVESICK GUYS WORKING IN MORGUES IN EVERY MAJOR CITY IN THE COUNTRY.
NONSENSE.
I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO CRACK ST. LOUIS.
BUT HERE YOU GO.
FEAST YOUR EYES.
IS THAT--


--DAIMON HELLSTROM?
LOOKS LIKE HIM, DOESN'T IT?
ONLY...HE'S BEEN SKINNED... THE PENTAGRAM STRIPPED RIGHT OFF HIM.
LIKE I SAID...
...KATY REALLY SEEMS TO LOVE TAKING A #$%@ ON MY ENTIRE EXISTENCE.


IT CAN'T BE HIM.
HE'S LOCKED UP. I PUT HIM AWAY IN VIRGINIA.
YEAH... WELL, I'M ALSO GETTING REPORTS OF HIM POPPING UP ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.
MAYBE HE'S SPAWNING... YOU KNOW...LIKE ONE OF YOU SYMBIOTES.
FUNNY.

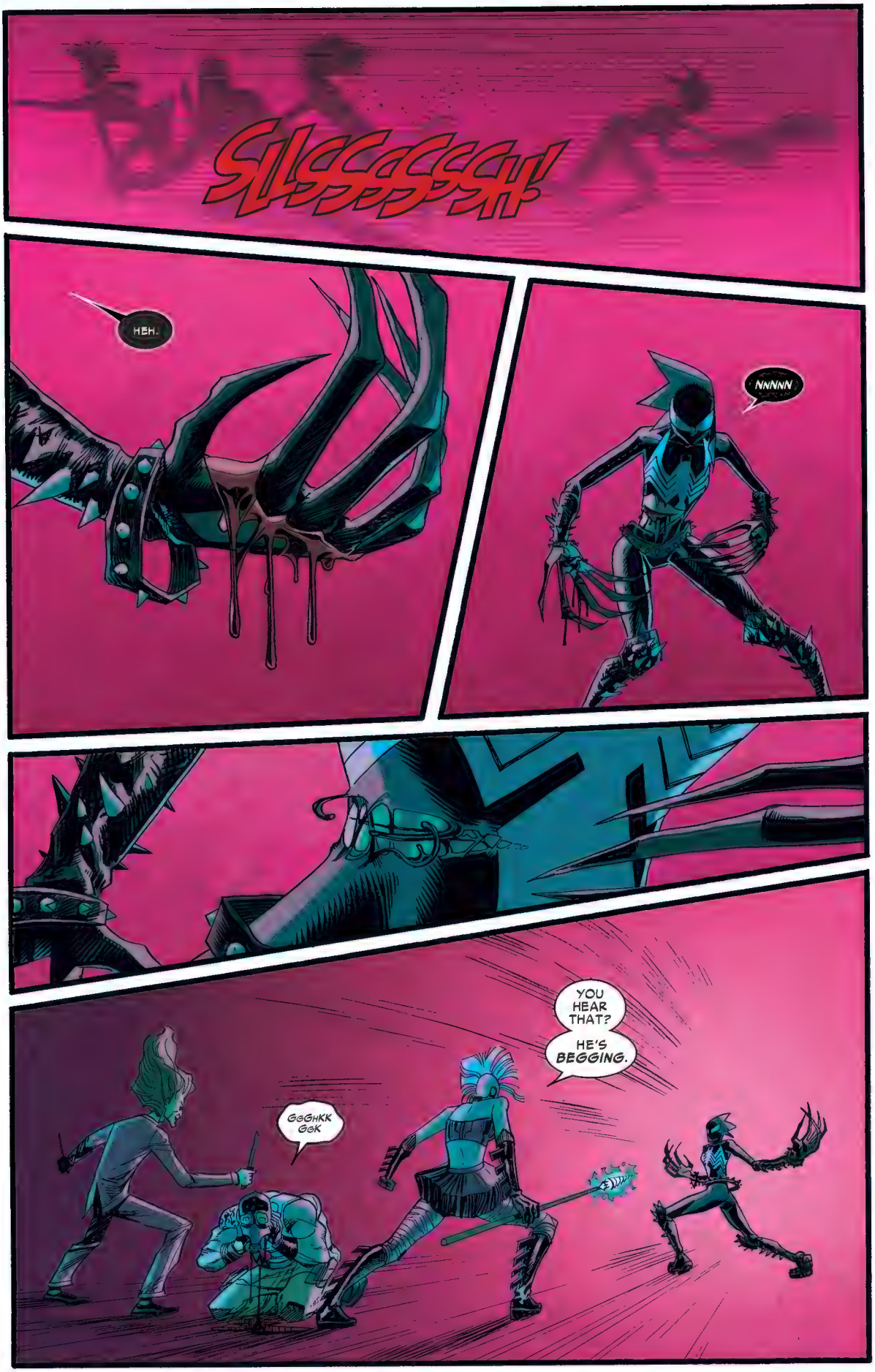

SPEAKING OF WHICH...
WHERE'S YOUR LITTLE SIDEKICK?

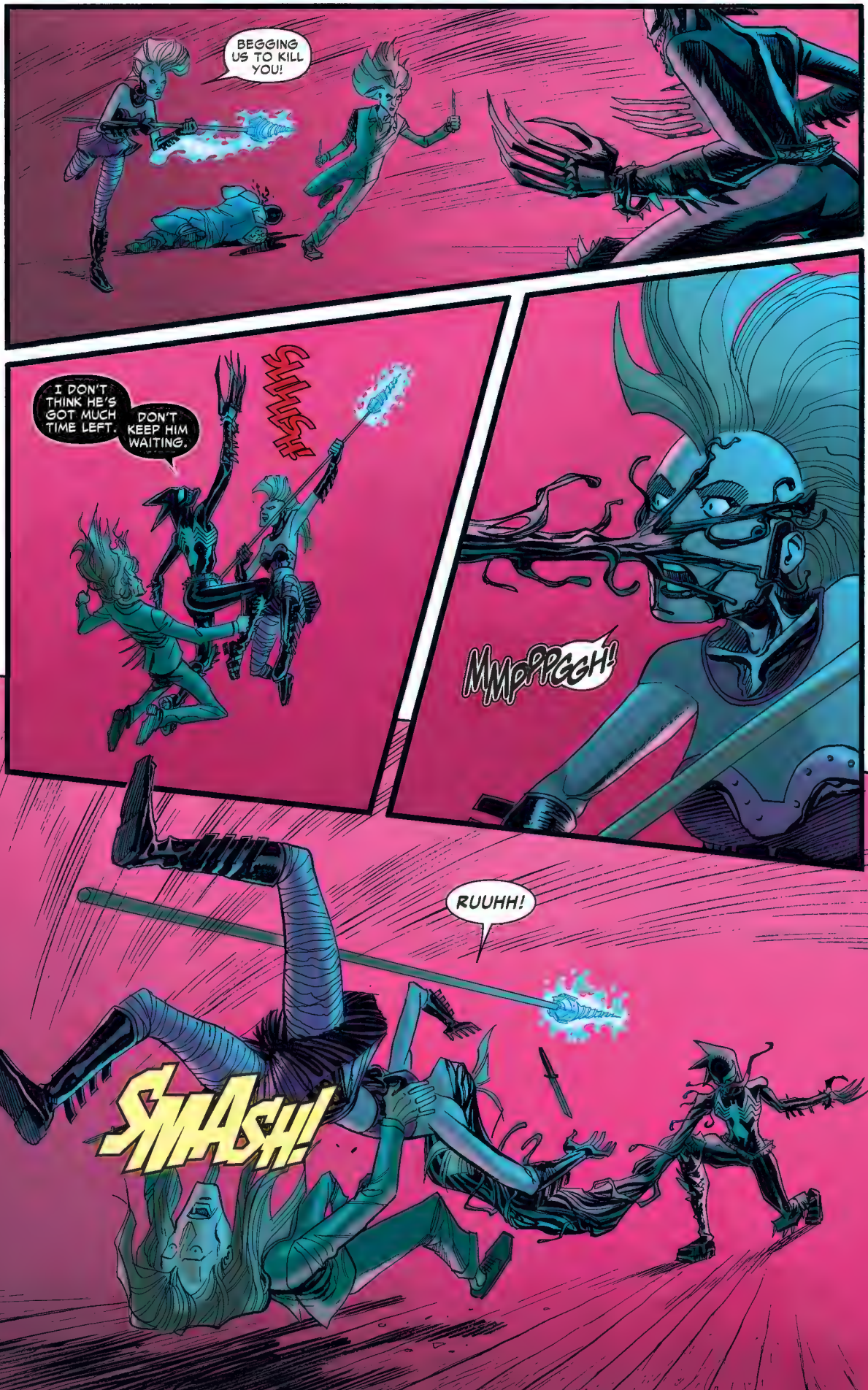


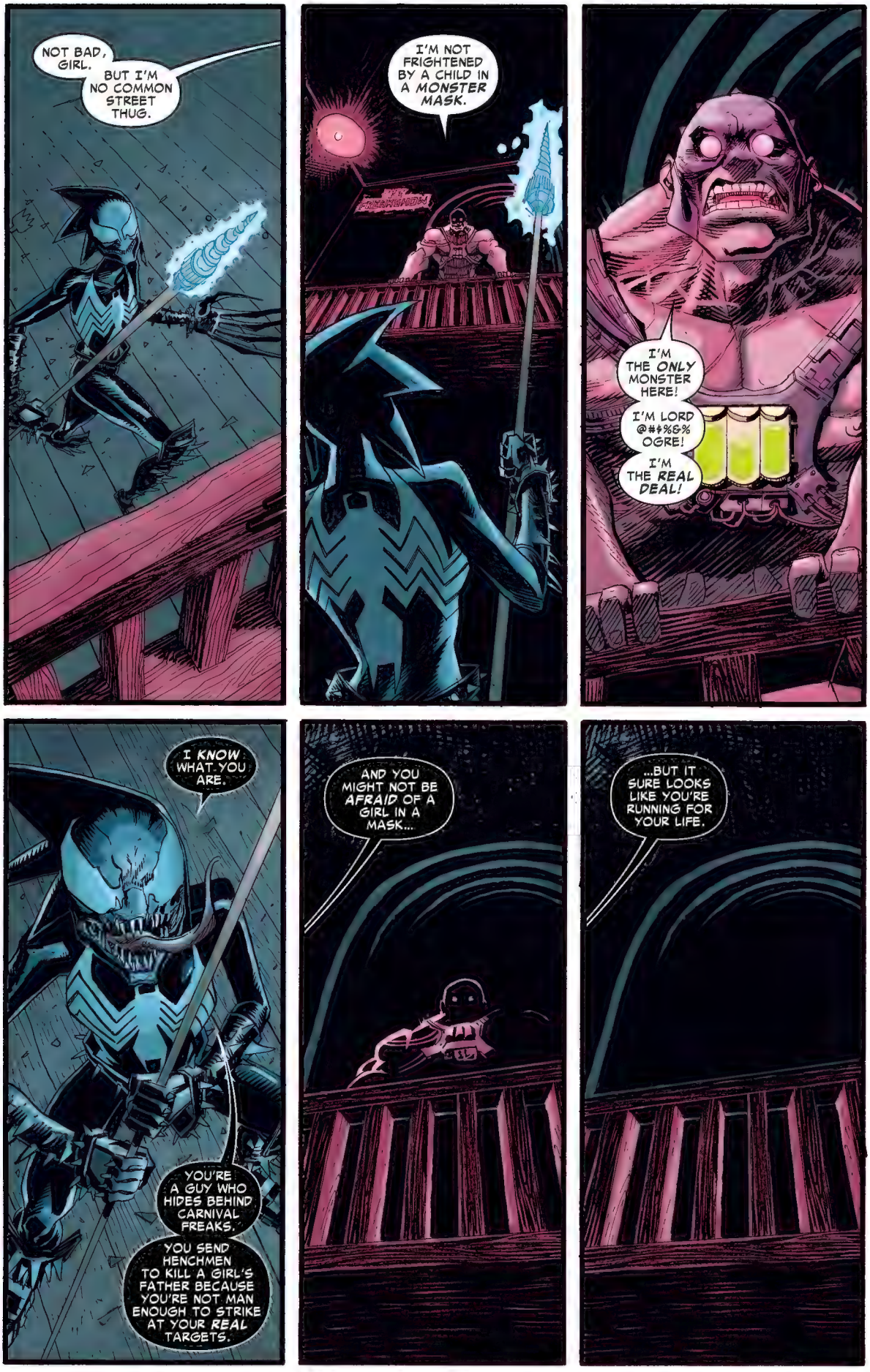

SHE'S NOT MY SIDEKICK.
WE'RE...
WE'RE WORKING THAT OUT.
ANYWAY, SHE'S SITTING THIS ONE OUT...

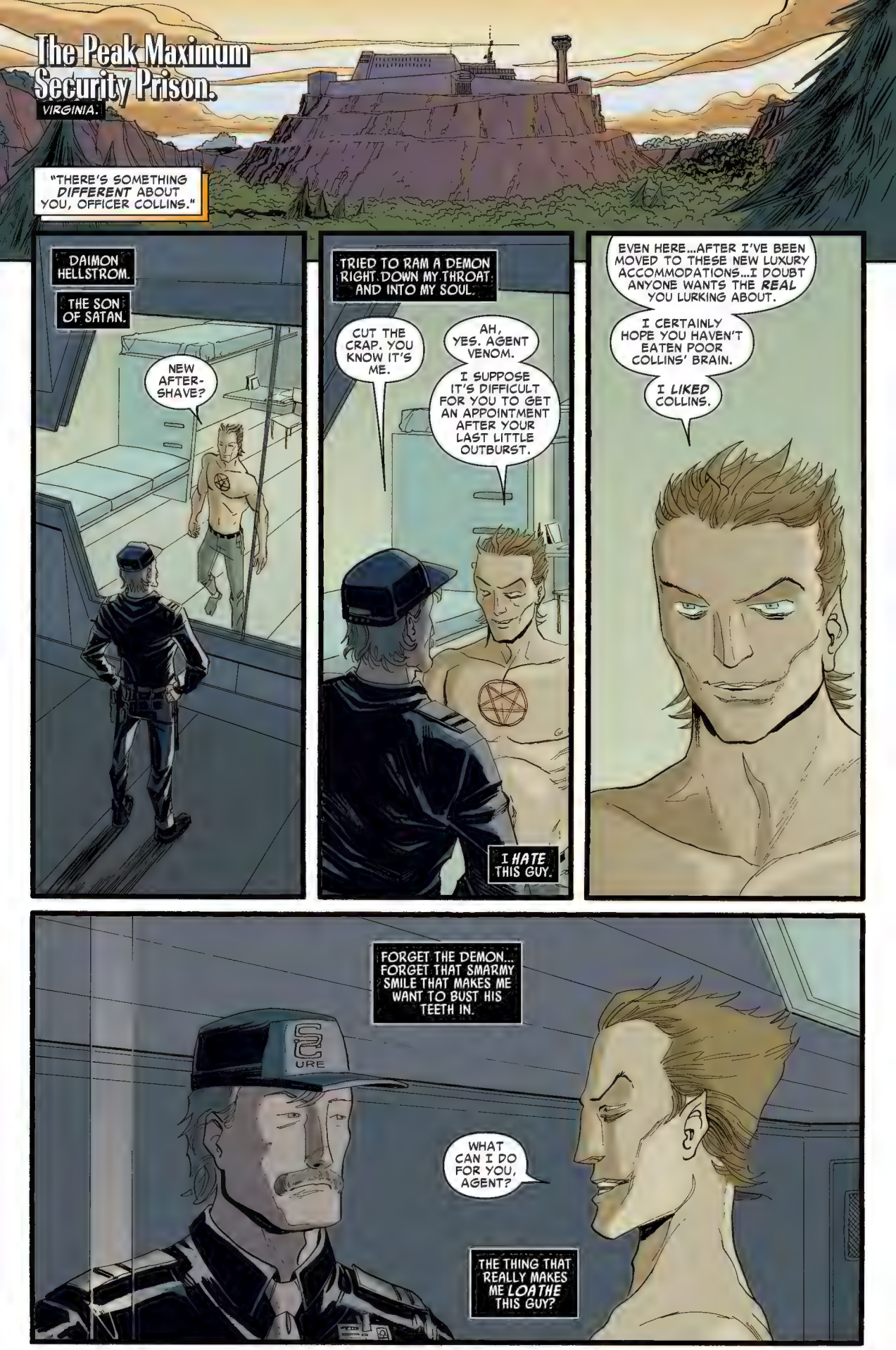
"...LAYING LOW IN PHILLY."
GET BACK! GET BACK!
OUT OF THE WAY!
MOVE!
IT'S HIM!
IT'S VENOM!
YOU VERMIN COULDN'T BE SO LUCKY.
THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU.
YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM.
BUT ME...
YOU CAN CALL ME--
--MANIA!

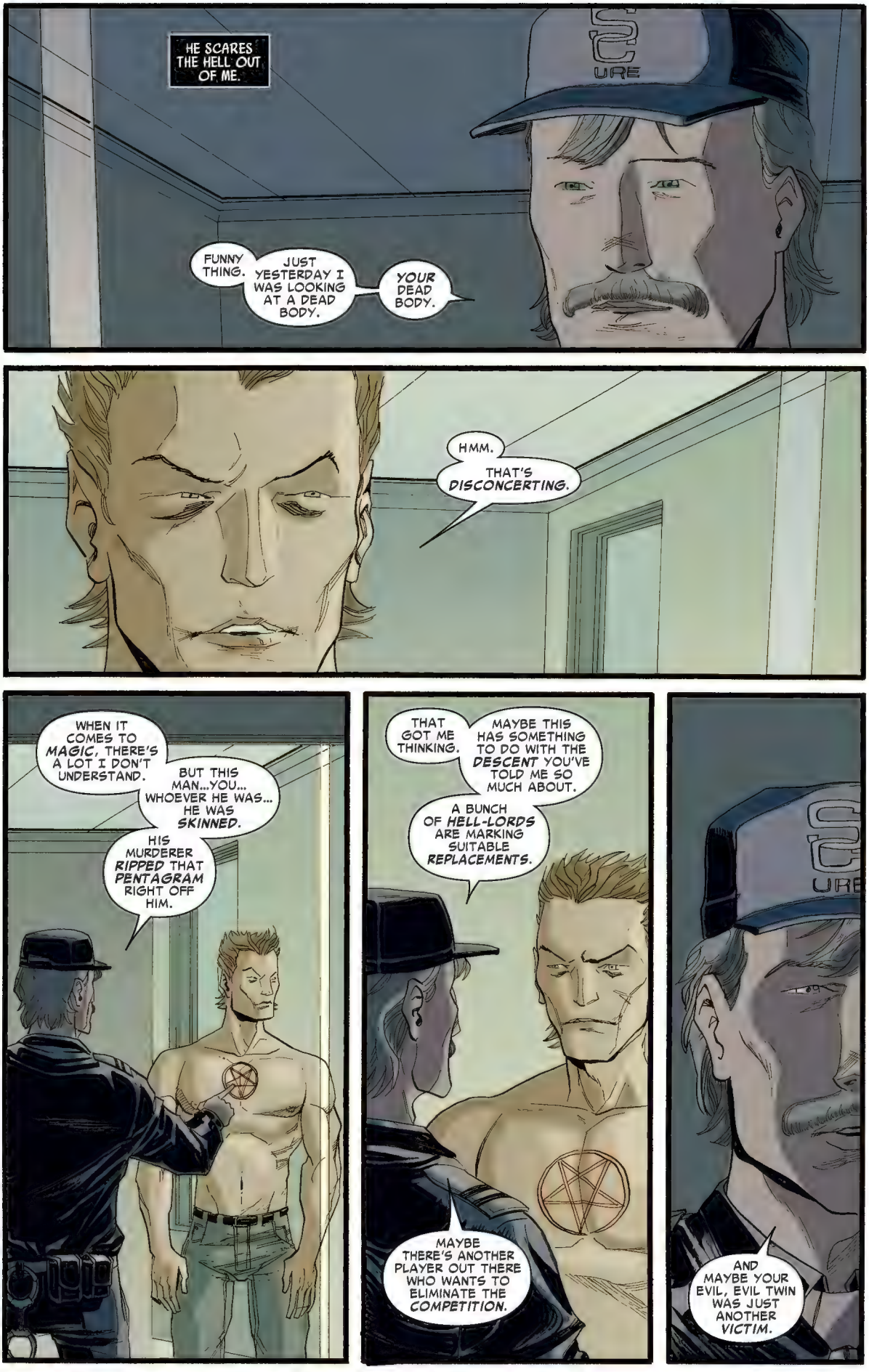
YOU'RE GONNA DIE SCREAMING THAT NAME UNLESS SOMEONE TELLS ME WHERE TO FIND--
I'M RIGHT HERE, GIRL.
COME AND GET ME.
LORD OGRE!
KNEEL DOWN AND PRAY WHEN YOU SAY HIS NAME!

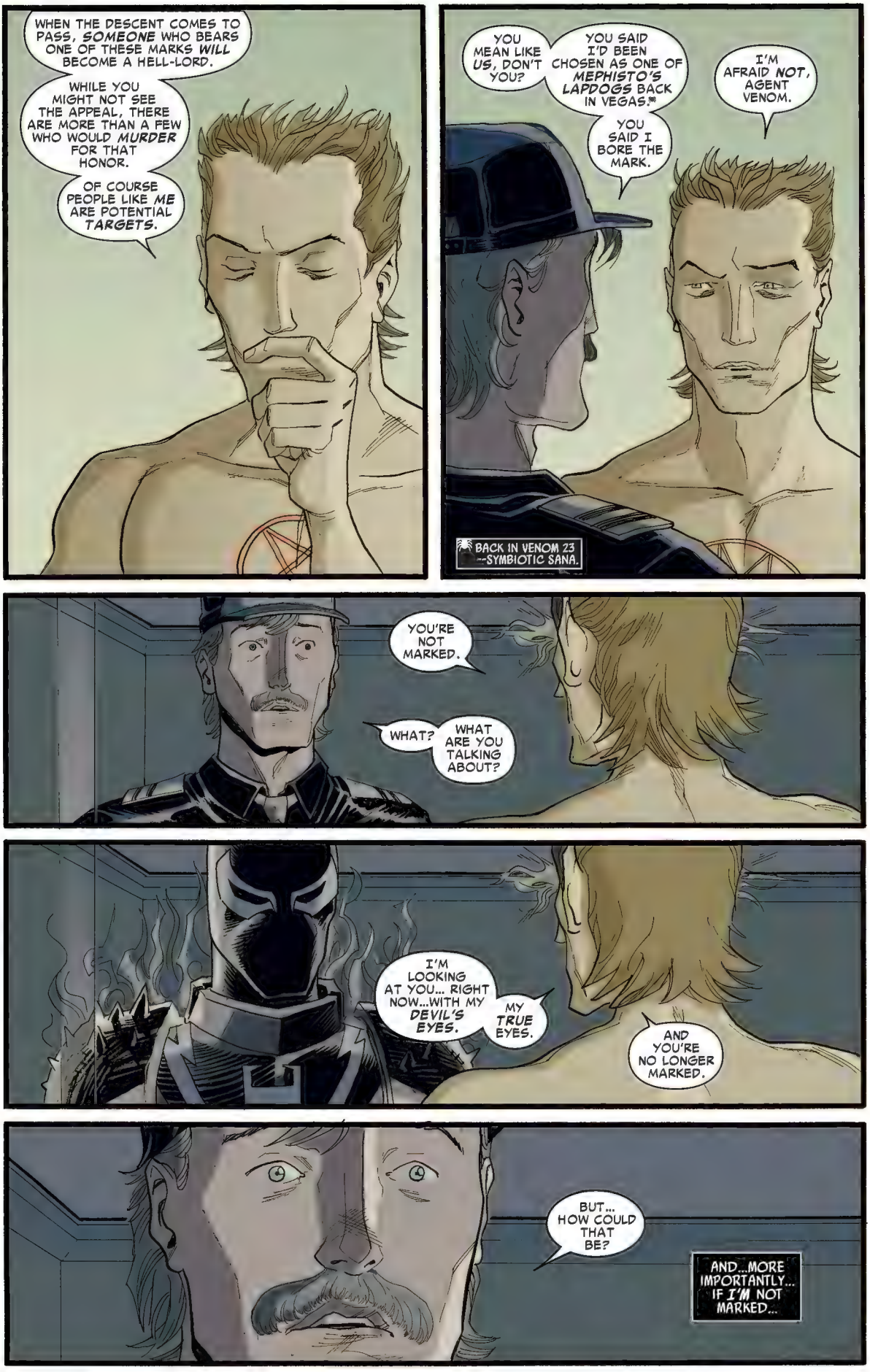

SLLSSSSSH!
HEH.
NNNNN
YOU HEAR THAT?
HE'S BEGGING.
GGGHKK GGK

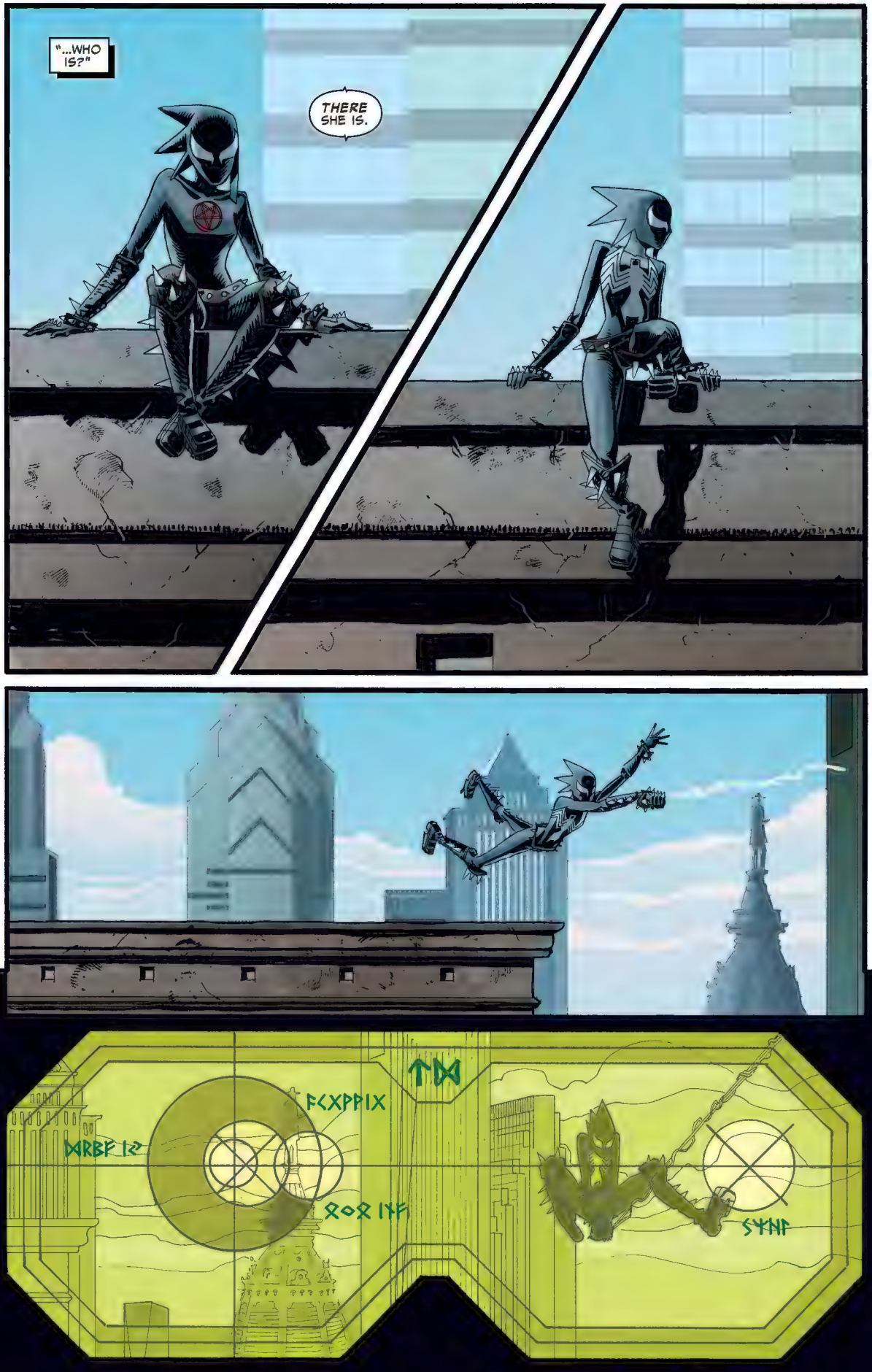

BEGGING US TO KILL YOU!
I DON'T THINK HE'S GOT MUCH TIME LEFT.
DON'T KEEP HIM WAITING.
SLLISH!
MMPPPGGH!
RUUHH!
SMASH!


NOT BAD, GIRL.
BUT I'M NO COMMON STREET THUG.
I'M NOT FRIGHTENED BY A CHILD IN A MONSTER MASK.
I'M THE ONLY MONSTER HERE!
I'M LORD @#%&% OGRE!
I'M THE REAL DEAL!
I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE.
YOU'RE A GUY WHO HIDES BEHIND CARNIVAL FREAKS.
YOU SEND HENCHMEN TO KILL A GIRL'S FATHER BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT MAN ENOUGH TO STRIKE AT YOUR REAL TARGETS.
AND YOU MIGHT NOT BE AFRAID OF A GIRL IN A MASK...
...BUT IT SURE LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE RUNNING FOR YOUR LIFE.


The Peak Maximum Security Prison.
VIRGINIA.
"THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT YOU, OFFICER COLLINS."
DAIMON HELLSTROM.
THE SON OF SATAN.
NEW AFTER-SHAVE?
TRIED TO RAM A DEMON RIGHT DOWN MY THROAT AND INTO MY SOUL.
CUT THE CRAP. YOU KNOW IT'S ME.
AH, YES. AGENT VENOM.
I SUPPOSE IT'S DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO GET AN APPOINTMENT AFTER YOUR LAST LITTLE OUTBURST.
I HATE THIS GUY.
EVEN HERE...AFTER I'VE BEEN MOVED TO THESE NEW LUXURY ACCOMMODATIONS...I DOUBT ANYONE WANTS THE REAL YOU LURKING ABOUT.
I CERTAINLY HOPE YOU HAVEN'T EATEN POOR COLLINS' BRAIN.
I LIKED COLLINS.
FORGET THE DEMON... FORGET THAT SMARMY SMILE THAT MAKES ME WANT TO BUST HIS TEETH IN.
URE
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, AGENT?
THE THING THAT REALLY MAKES ME LOATHE THIS GUY?


HE SCARES THE HELL OUT OF ME.
FUNNY THING.
JUST YESTERDAY I WAS LOOKING AT A DEAD BODY.
YOUR DEAD BODY.
HMM.
THAT'S DISCONCERTING.
WHEN IT COMES TO MAGIC, THERE'S A LOT I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
BUT THIS MAN...YOU... WHOEVER HE WAS... HE WAS SKINNED.
HIS MURDERER RIPPED THAT PENTAGRAM RIGHT OFF HIM.
THAT GOT ME THINKING.
MAYBE THIS HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE DESCENT YOU'VE TOLD ME SO MUCH ABOUT.
A BUNCH OF HELL-LORDS ARE MARKING SUITABLE REPLACEMENTS.
MAYBE THERE'S ANOTHER PLAYER OUT THERE WHO WANTS TO ELIMINATE THE COMPETITION.
AND MAYBE YOUR EVIL, EVIL TWIN WAS JUST ANOTHER VICTIM.


WHEN THE DESCENT COMES TO PASS, SOMEONE WHO BEARS ONE OF THESE MARKS WILL BECOME A HELL-LORD.
WHILE YOU MIGHT NOT SEE THE APPEAL, THERE ARE MORE THAN A FEW WHO WOULD MURDER FOR THAT HONOR.
OF COURSE PEOPLE LIKE ME ARE POTENTIAL TARGETS.
YOU MEAN LIKE US, DON'T YOU?
YOU SAID I'D BEEN CHOSEN AS ONE OF MEPHISTO'S LAPDOGS BACK IN VEGAS.
YOU SAID I BORE THE MARK.
I'M AFRAID NOT, AGENT VENOM.
BACK IN VENOM 23 --SYMBIOTIC SANA.
YOU'RE NOT MARKED.
WHAT?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I'M LOOKING AT YOU... RIGHT NOW...WITH MY DEVIL'S EYES.
MY TRUE EYES.
AND YOU'RE NO LONGER MARKED.
BUT... HOW COULD THAT BE?
AND...MORE IMPORTANTLY... IF I'M NOT MARKED...


"...WHO IS?"
THERE SHE IS.

ARE YOU SURE, CROSSBONES?
UH... SIR...
LOOKS LIKE A *KID* TO ME.

DON'T SEE HOW THAT CHANGES A THING.
WE'RE COLLECTING *HELL-MARKS.*

THERE AIN'T BUT ONE WAY TO GET THEM.
WE *HUNT* HER.
WE *KILL* HER.

"AND WE *SKIN* HER."
To Be Continued...

SYMBIWROTE

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NEXT!

ALSO ON SALE:

SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #17

DAREDEVIL: DARK NIGHTS #4

SUPERIOR FOES OF SPIDER-MAN #3

VENOM
DEGUN 2013
MARVEL
BUNN
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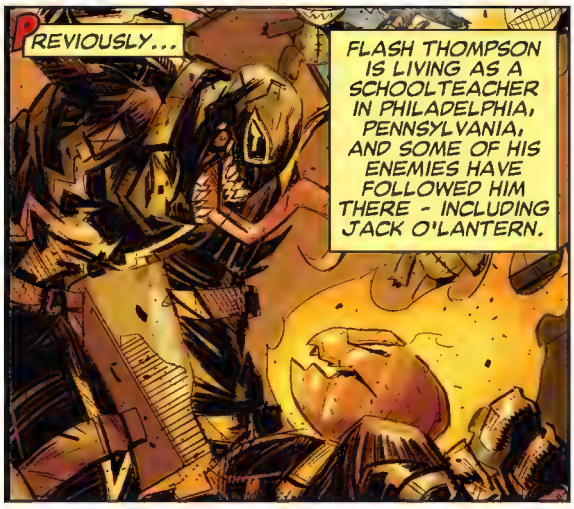
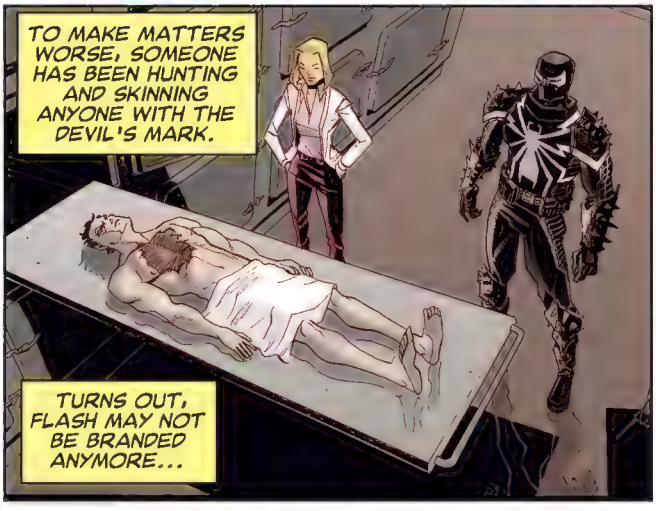
LOUGHRIDGE
041

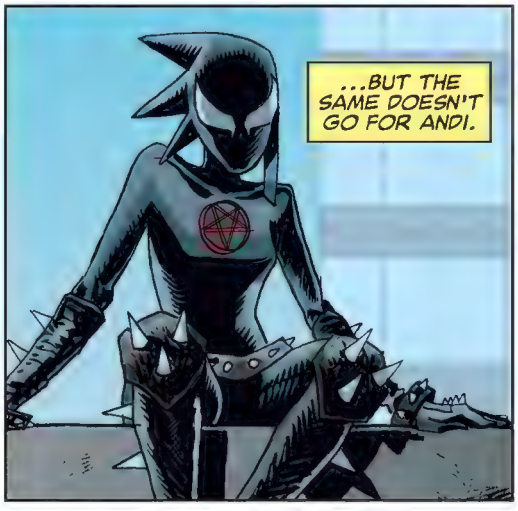
Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high school bully turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM


PREVIOUSLY...
FLASH THOMPSON IS LIVING AS A SCHOOLTEACHER IN PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, AND SOME OF HIS ENEMIES HAVE FOLLOWED HIM THERE - INCLUDING JACK O'LANTERN.

ATTACKING VENOM, JACK ALSO PUT ONE OF FLASH'S STUDENTS IN DANGER, A GIRL NAMED ANDI. HOPING TO PROTECT HER, FLASH GAVE HER A PIECE OF THE VENOM SYMBIOTE.


TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, SOMEONE HAS BEEN HUNTING AND SKINNING ANYONE WITH THE DEVIL'S MARK.
TURNS OUT, FLASH MAY NOT BE BRANDED ANYMORE...



MANIA part 2 of 3

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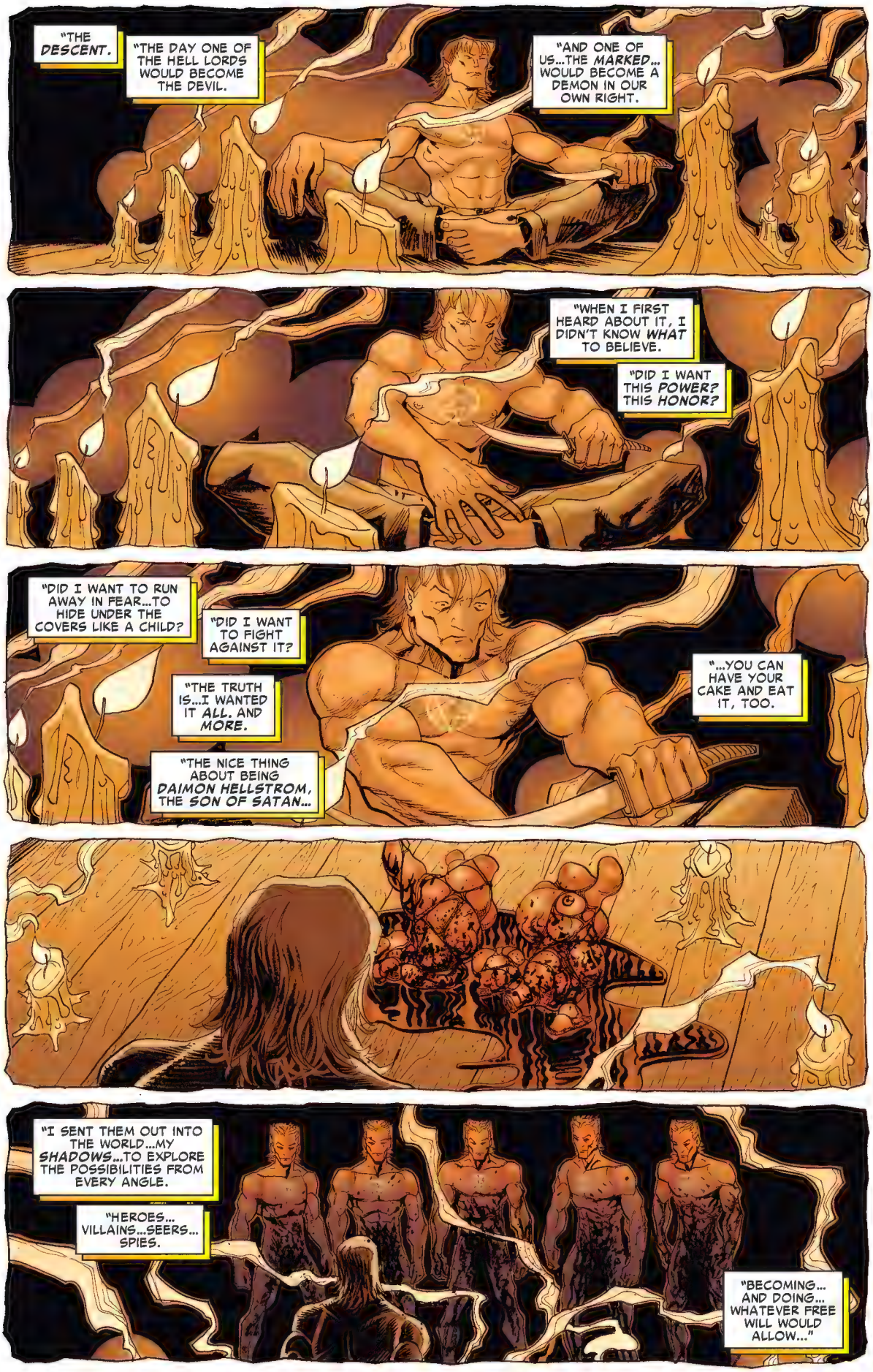

"THE DESCENT.
"THE DAY ONE OF THE HELL LORDS WOULD BECOME THE DEVIL.
"AND ONE OF US...THE MARKED... WOULD BECOME A DEMON IN OUR OWN RIGHT.
"WHEN I FIRST HEARD ABOUT IT, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO BELIEVE.
"DID I WANT THIS POWER? THIS HONOR?
"DID I WANT TO RUN AWAY IN FEAR...TO HIDE UNDER THE COVERS LIKE A CHILD?
"DID I WANT TO FIGHT AGAINST IT?
"THE TRUTH IS...I WANTED IT ALL. AND MORE.
"THE NICE THING ABOUT BEING DAIMON HELLSTROM, THE SON OF SATAN...
"...YOU CAN HAVE YOUR CAKE AND EAT IT, TOO.
"I SENT THEM OUT INTO THE WORLD...MY SHADOWS...TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES FROM EVERY ANGLE.
"HEROES... VILLAINS...SEERS... SPIES.
"BECOMING... AND DOING... WHATEVER FREE WILL WOULD ALLOW..."

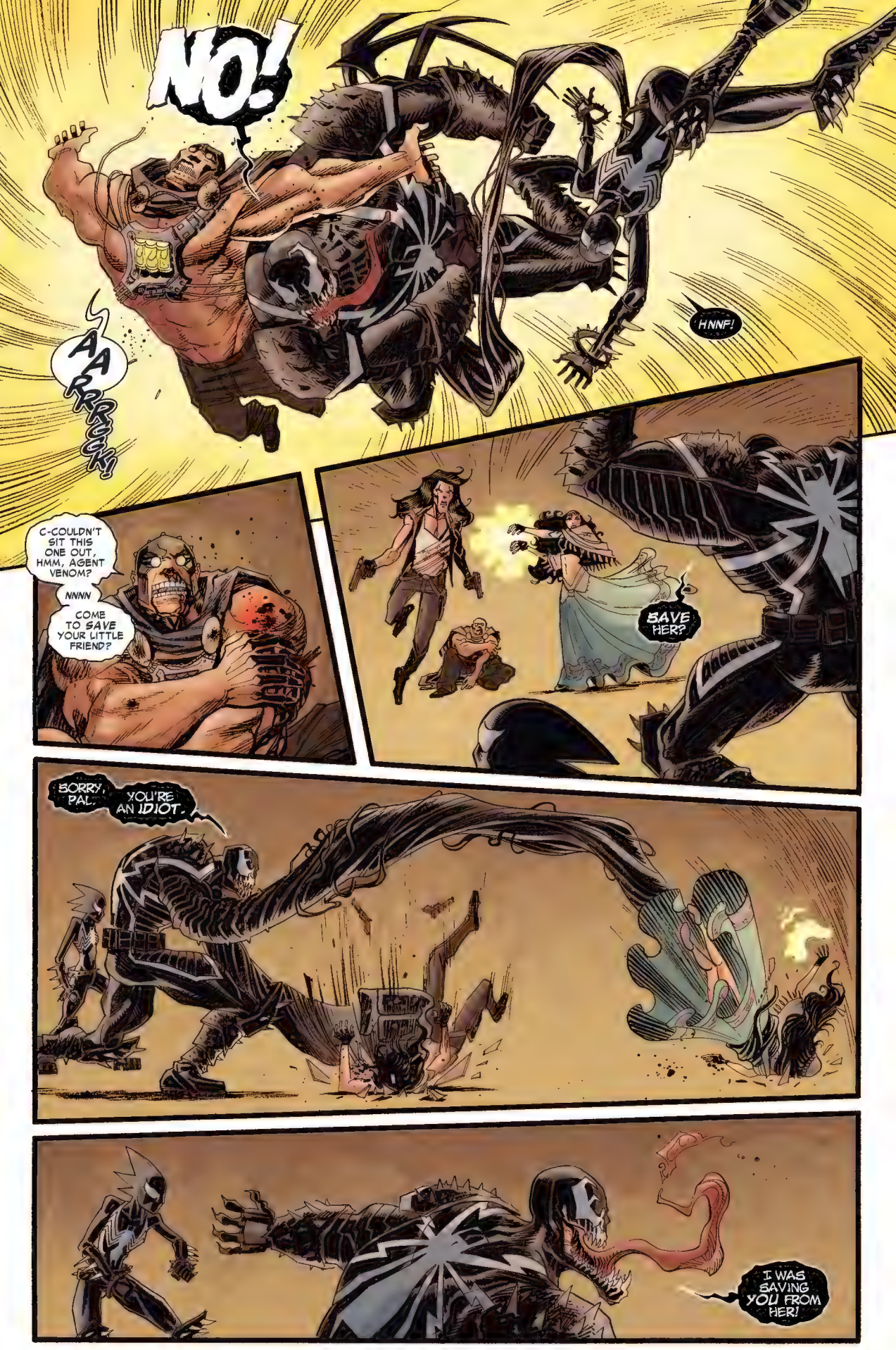
...I WANTED THEM TO EXPLORE EVERY POSSIBLE FACET OF THE COMING DESCENT.
BUT MY...OTHERS... WERE TOO HEAD-STRONG. SOME OF THEM DIDN'T EVEN BELIEVE.
I COULDN'T TELL YOU... NOT WITH ANY DEGREE OF CERTAINTY...
...IF I'M EVEN THE ORIGINAL.
SO...YOU'RE--WHAT--A COPY OF DAIMON HELLSTROM?
POSSIBLY.
AND A FLAWED COPY AT THAT.
I'VE FALLEN SO FAR.
YEAH.
IT'S ALWAYS A WAKEUP CALL WHEN YOU HIT ROCK BOTTOM, HUH?
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE MARKS?
THE ONE MEPHISTO BRANDED ME WITH...
...YOU SAID IT WAS--
GONE, AGENT VENOM.
AND YOU SHOULD COUNT YOURSELF LUCKY.
NOT ONLY ARE YOU FREE OF ANY INFERNAL OBLIGATION...BUT IT WOULD SEEM SOMEONE IS HUNTING THE MARKED FOR THEIR SKINS.
SOME OF MY... OTHER...SELVES HAVE ALREADY BEEN MURDERED.
IT WOULD SEEM I'M SAFEST RIGHT HERE.
NICE TO SEE YOU'RE MORE WORRIED ABOUT YOURSELF--
MY OWN SKIN, SO TO SPEAK.
--THAN THE OTHERS WHO ARE OUT THERE RIGHT NOW...AND STILL IN DANGER.
MAYBE YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT ROCK BOTTOM FEELS LIKE JUST YET.

BUT YOU'RE DAMN SURE ON YOUR WAY DOWN.
Philadelphia.
LORD. OGRE'S PENTHOUSE.
SO...YOU THINK HE'S GONNA FIND US?
VENOM, I MEAN.
SOONER OR LATER, YEAH. WE'RE GONNA BE FOUND.
QUESTION IS, IS IT GONNA BE VENOM THAT FINDS US...OR THE OTHER ONE...THE ONE WHO TORE UP THE FREAK SHOW THE OTHER NIGHT?
YOU MEAN THE *GIRL?*
WHAT'S SHE CALLED? *SHE-VENOM?*
IF WE'RE GONNA RUN UP AGAINST ONE OF THEM, I'D RATHER IT BE A GIRL THAN--
UH...

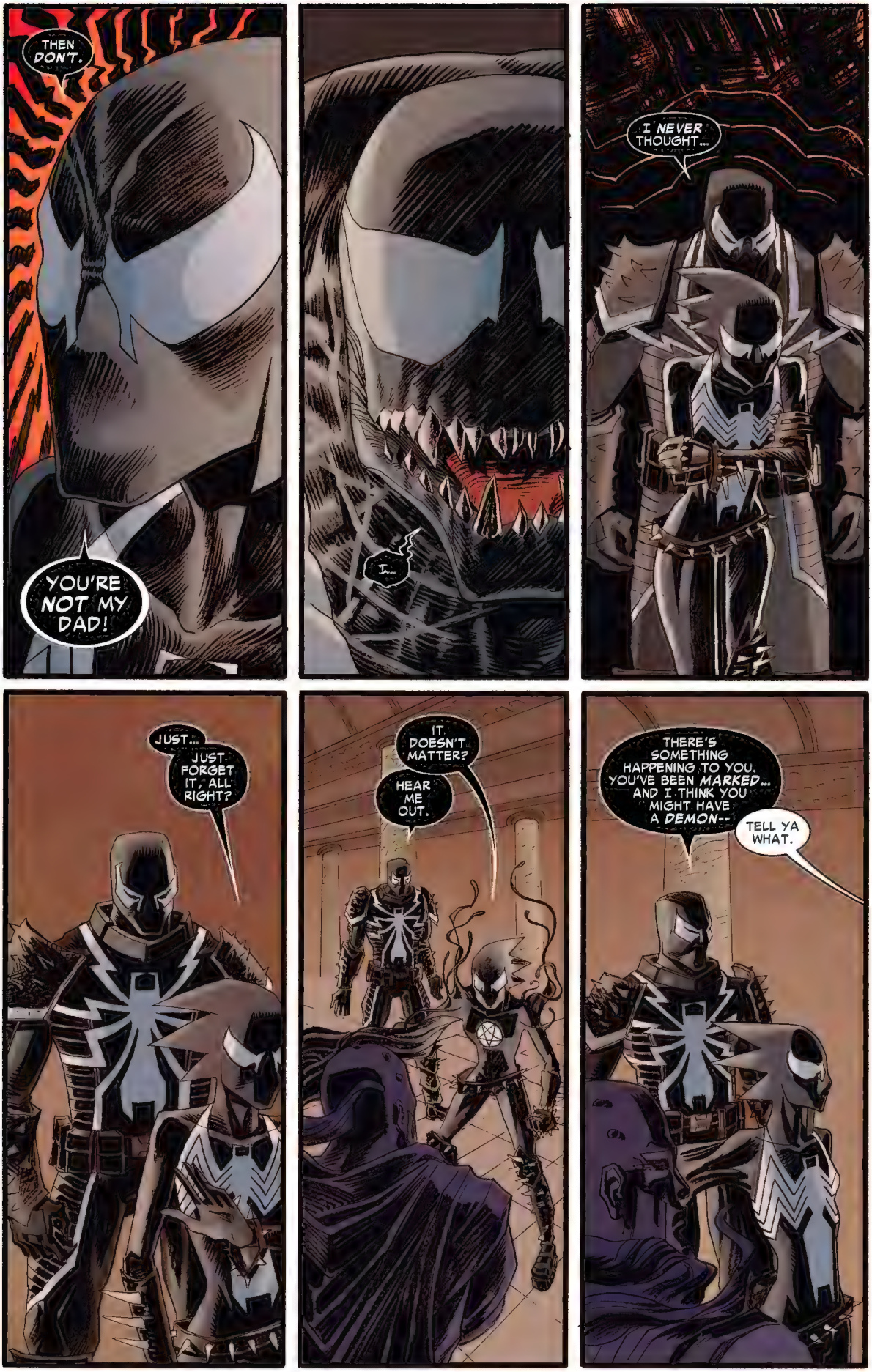
YEEEEAAAAAARRGGH!
CR-CRASH!
KRAK!
AH.
SHE'S HERE.
LET US GUT HER--
NO. LET HER COME.
LET'S SEE IF THIS CHILD IS HALF THE BEAST SHE'D HAVE US BELIEVE.
OGRE!
SLASH!

NO MORE RUNNING, TOUGH GUY!
NO.
NO MORE RUNNING...FOR EITHER OF US.
BUT CHOICES?
HRRK!
YES.
WE STILL HAVE CHOICES TO MAKE.
AND NOW IS THE TIME.
SO EAGER TO KILL.
NEVER CONSIDERING THE CONSEQUENCES.
NEVER CONSIDERING THAT WHEN I DIE, MY GOSPEL WILL SPREAD ON THE WIND.
SO MANY PEOPLE...DYING... BREATHING THEIR LAST BREATH.
NEVER KNOWING WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THEM.
NEVER KNOWING THE NAME OF THE PERSON WHO KILLED THEM...WHO UNLEASHED A DEATH-CLOUD TO WASH OVER THEM.
AND THAT NAME...WOULD IT BE LORD OGRE?
OR MANIA?

A...A BOMB? SOME SORT OF CHEMICAL WEAPON?
AND...IF YOU DIE...YOU TAKE A GOOD CHUNK OF THE POPULATION WITH YOU?
YOU'D KILL EVERYONE... JUST LIKE THAT?
AMEN.
GUESS I CAN'T SIMPLY KILL YOU THEN, HUH?
THAT'S A REAL @#$% MOVE. YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?
PLAYING THE COWARD CARD LIKE THAT...
...AND I'M STILL GONNA BOUNCE YOU ON YOUR ASS.
SEE...I'M PRETTY MUCH PROTECTED FROM CHEMICALS AND TOXIC GASES.
THAT'S HOW I PUT UP WITH YOUR B.O.
AND IF KILLING YOU MEANS DROPPING A BUNCH OF OTHER PEOPLE I DON'T KNOW...
...I CAN LIVE WITH IT.
WHAT--
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
I'M SAYING...
...I'M CALLING YOUR BLUFF.


NO!
AARRRUCK!
HNNF!
C-COULDN'T SIT THIS ONE OUT, HMM, AGENT VENOM?
NNNN
COME TO SAVE YOUR LITTLE FRIEND?
SAVE HER?
SORRY, PAL.
YOU'RE AN IDIOT.
I WAS SAVING YOU FROM HER!

YOU'RE IN BIG TROUBLE, YOUNG LADY.
I TOLD YOU TO STAY PUT.
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU WERE DOING?
I WAS GETTING THE JOB DONE!
IF I HADN'T STOPPED YOU WHEN I DID...
...YOU WOULD HAVE SET OFF THAT BOMB...
...KILLED GOD KNOWS HOW MANY PEOPLE.
HE WAS BLUFFING!
YOU COULDN'T KNOW THAT!
I KNEW, ALL RIGHT?
A GUY LIKE THAT... HE'S TOO MUCH OF A COWARD TO WALK AROUND WITH A CHEMICAL WEAPON ON HIS CHEST!
AND WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU AREN'T AS SMART AS YOU THINK YOU ARE?
DON'T!
DON'T YOU GO ANYWHERE!
ANOTHER STEP AND I SWEAR I'LL CUT HER LOOSE ON YOU!
LOOK... I'M JUST LOOKING OUT FOR YOU.
YOU'RE NOT YOURSELF... AND IF THE SYMBIOTE WASN'T BAD ENOUGH, I THINK THERE'S SOMETHING MORE.
I DON'T MEAN TO COME DOWN ON YOU--


THEN DON'T.
YOU'RE NOT MY DAD!
I...
I NEVER THOUGHT...
JUST... JUST FORGET IT, ALL RIGHT?
IT DOESN'T MATTER?
HEAR ME OUT.
THERE'S SOMETHING HAPPENING TO YOU. YOU'VE BEEN MARKED... AND I THINK YOU MIGHT HAVE A DEMON--
TELL YA WHAT.

WHY DON'T YOU LET ME WORRY ABOUT DEVIL'S MARKS AND SUCH?
WHAT ARE YOU?
ANOTHER ONE OF OGRE'S FREAKS?
MAYBE THINKING THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO TAKE HIS PLACE?
NAME'S CROSSBONES.
YOU AN' ME GOT BUSINESS, LITTLE LADY.
ALL RIGHT.
MASTER MAYHEM.
DO YOUR THING.

LEAVE THE MARK INTACT.
EVERYTHING ELSE IS KIBBLES AND BITS.
OHHHH.
DADDY'S RINGING THE DINNER BELL.
HOLD ONTO YOUR BUTTS.
THAT...
...IS ACTUALLY GOOD ADVICE.
REEEAARRRGGGK!
BLAM! BLAM!
SEE? THIS IS WHY YOU NEED TO LISTEN TO ME!
CAN YOU SAVE THE LECTURES UNTIL WE'RE NOT BEING--

--EATEN ALIVE?
YEEEAAAAARRRGH!
SHRRK
GRRSSHK!
SHHRRRRREEEEEK!
UH... COACH...
I'M NOT SO SURE OGRE WAS BLUFFING AFTER ALL!
JUST...KEEP FIGHTING!
CLEAR AN ESCAPE ROUTE!
BREE-BREE-BREEP-BREEEEEEP
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS!
VSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS

GUY IN THE ROBE... SPITTING DEMONS OUT FROM HIS INSIDES.
HOLE IN HIS CHEST... SOME SORT OF EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL GATE TO THE UNDER-WORLD MAYBE?
MAYBE.
BUT IT'S THE ONLY SHOT I GOT.
ONE MORE HAIL MARY FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE.
FIRE IN THE HOLE!
EERP!
DID HE JUST SHOVE A BOMB UP YOUR--
URRRGGG.
I...I DON'T NEED THIS...
I COULD'VE GOTTEN STEADY WORK...
I COULD'VE BEEN A TEACHER.

ADMIT IT.
THAT WAS KINDA AWESOME.
YEAH... GREAT...
...BUT WE'VE STILL GOT AN ARMY OF DEMONS TO WORRY ABOUT!
SHHRRRREEEEKK!
GET OFF!
T-THEY... THEY LISTENED TO ME.
THE DEVIL'S MARK...GIVES ANDI SOME CONTROL OVER DEMONS.
CHANGES THE GAME.
SOMEBODY'S IN TROUBLE.

WHAT--
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
HEED YOUR MASTER'S WORDS!
DO AS YOU'RE TOLD!
VRRR-RRRT-
RRRT-RRRT-RRRT-
RRRT-RRRRT
RE
EEEAAAAK!
SHOULDA KNOWN...
@#$% DEMONS.
AND ME STUCK WITH A TWO-BIT KNOCK-OFF OF WIZARD WHO GETS HIS @$$ HANDED TO HIM ON A REGULAR BASIS.
HOLD ON A SEC.
"WHERE THE HELL DID OUR TARGETS GO?"

Flash Thompson's Apartment.
LATER.
WHAT AM I LOOKING AT, COACH?

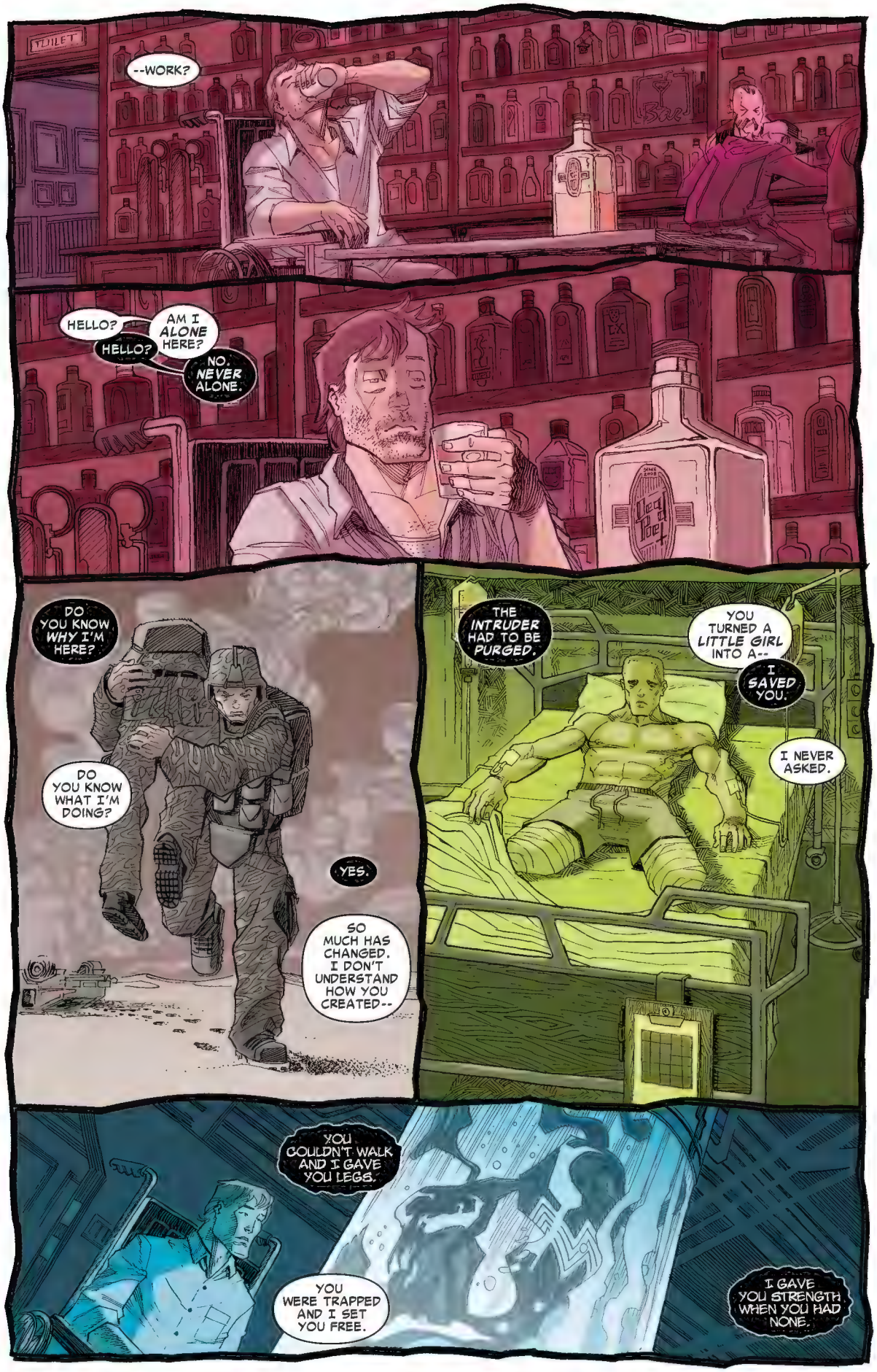
I FOUND IT A WHILE AGO. SPOILS OF WAR, I GUESS.
IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH DREDGING UP MEMORIES.
I DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND IT, BUT THAT'S NEVER STOPPED ME BEFORE.

I'M GONNA TRY TO USE IT TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE SYMBIOTE.
OUR CELLS ARE ALL MIXED TOGETHER...MAYBE OUR MEMORIES ARE, TOO.
AND I NEED YOU TO STAND BY. IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG, YOU USE THE CONTENTS OF THIS SYRINGE TO STOP ME.
THIS IS... LIKE...THE WORST PLAN EVER.

PROBABLY. BUT BAD IDEAS ARE MY BREAD AND BUTTER.
THE SYMBIOTE...IT SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO THE THINGS IT'S DONE.
WE BOTH NEED TO KNOW IF THERE ARE MORE SURPRISES IN STORE.
AND THE MARK?
YOU THINK YOU CAN FIND OUT ABOUT THAT, TOO?

THAT'S THE PLAN.
BUT WHO KNOWS?

IT PROBABLY WON'T EVEN--


TOILET
--WORK?
HELLO?
HELLO?
AM I ALONE HERE?
NO. NEVER ALONE.
DO YOU KNOW WHY I'M HERE?
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I'M DOING?
YES.
SO MUCH HAS CHANGED. I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU CREATED--
THE INTRUDER HAD TO BE PURGED.
YOU TURNED A LITTLE GIRL INTO A--
I SAVED YOU.
I NEVER ASKED.
YOU COULDN'T WALK AND I GAVE YOU LEGS.
YOU WERE TRAPPED AND I SET YOU FREE.
I GAVE YOU STRENGTH WHEN YOU HAD NONE.

THE MARK. THE DEVIL'S MARK--
WAS NEVER YOURS.
THEY WANTED ME, NOT YOU.
I WAS BRANDED.
IT WAS ON MY SOUL.
I CUT THE SICKNESS OUT.
WHAT DID YOU DO?
I PROTECTED YOU!
I'VE ALWAYS PROTECTED YOU!
AND YOU FEARED ME...DRUGGED ME...PRAYED TO GET RID OF ME!
YOU HURT ME!
UNLESS IT SUITED YOU TO USE ME!

VENOM WAS STRONG.
VENOM COULD BEAR THE MARK.
BUT IT WAS A TRICK.
A DEMON... ROOTED IN MY SOUL.
THE MARK HOLDS THE DEMON AT BAY...
...BUT ONLY FOR SO LONG.
SEEPING INTO OUR VERY BEING.
BECOMING US IN TIME.
SO WE CUT IT OUT.
EXPEL THE DISEASE BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
RRRAAAAAARRGHH!

NNNNNNGG
W-WAIT.
SMACK!
ARE YOU--
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I DON'T KNOW.
I THINK SO.
BUT I DON'T KNOW.
O-KAY.
DID YOU AT LEAST GET WHATEVER ANSWERS YOU WERE LOOKING FOR?
I...
MAYBE?
NO. NOT REALLY.
BUT I THINK I KNOW WHAT WE HAVE TO DO NEXT.
"WE HAVE TO MAKE A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL."
To Be Continued...

SYMBIWROTE

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NEXT!

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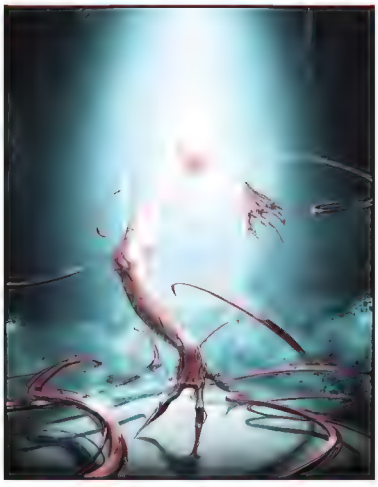
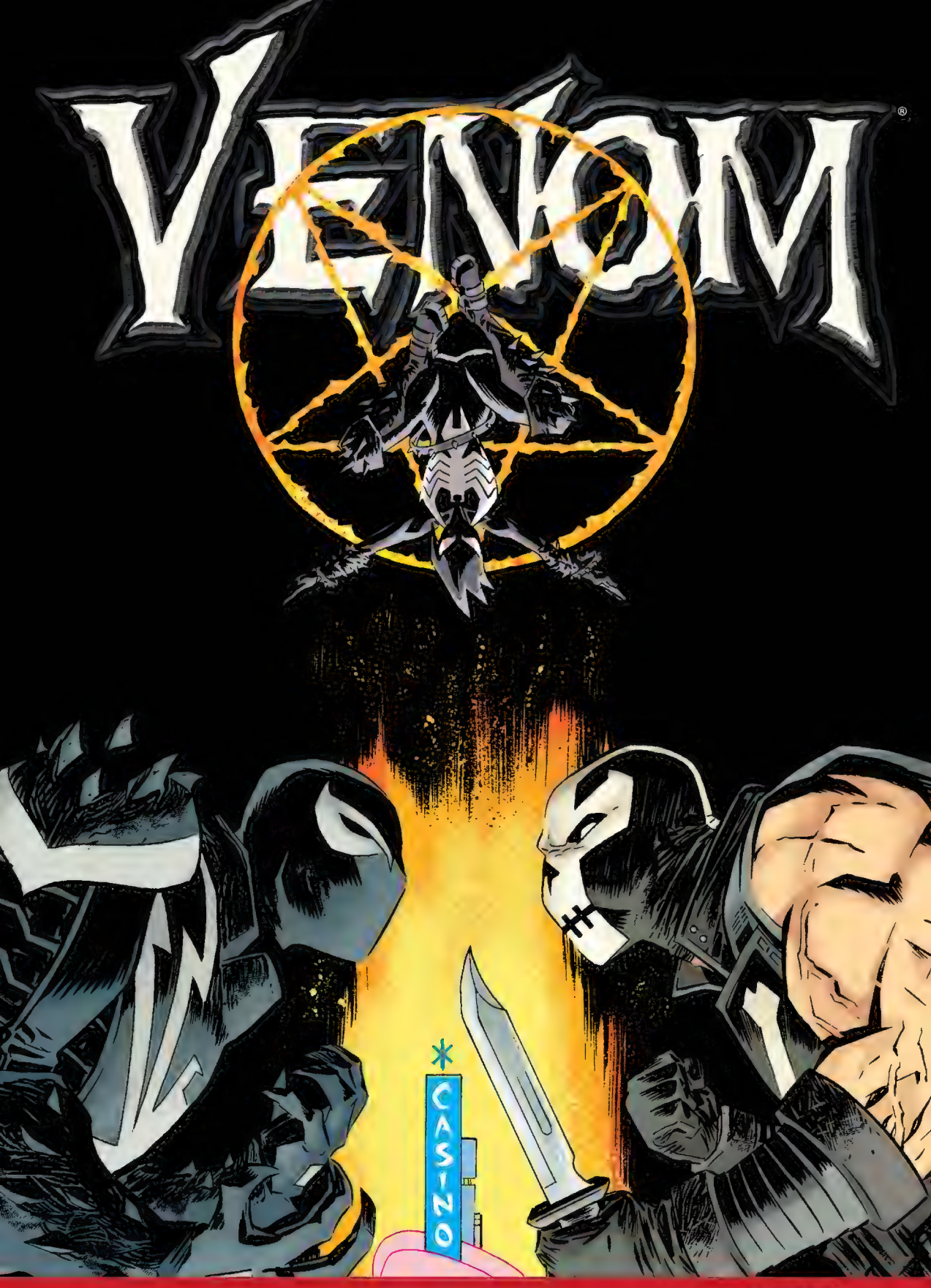
SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #18

MORBIUS THE LIVING VAMPIRE #9



SUPERIOR CARNAGE #3



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042

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high school bully turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

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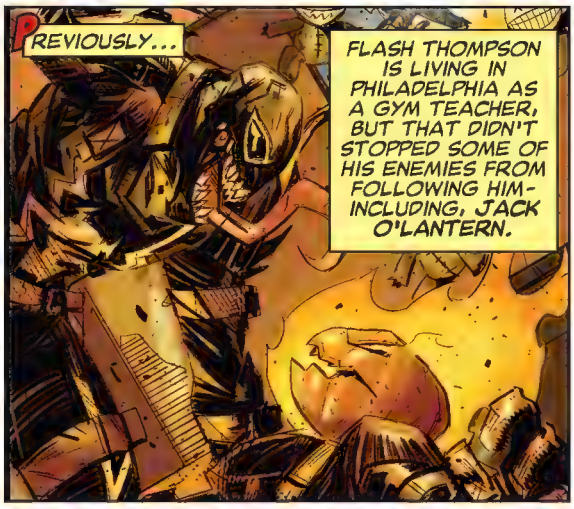
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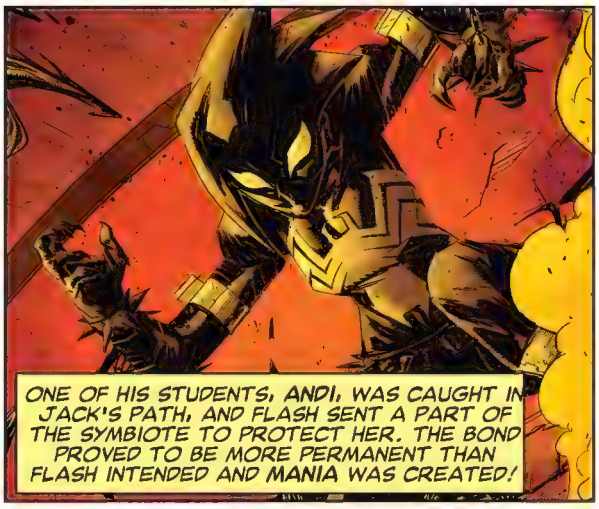
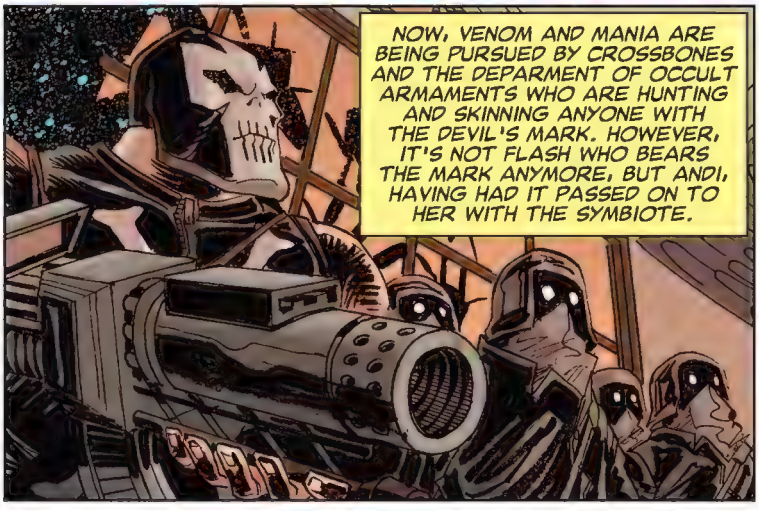

ONE OF HIS STUDENTS, ANDI, WAS CAUGHT IN JACK'S PATH, AND FLASH SENT A PART OF THE SYMBIOTE TO PROTECT HER. THE BOND PROVED TO BE MORE PERMANENT THAN FLASH INTENDED AND MANIA WAS CREATED!


NOW, VENOM AND MANIA ARE BEING PURSUED BY CROSSBONES AND THE DEPARMENT OF OCCULT ARMAMENTS WHO ARE HUNTING AND SKINNING ANYONE WITH THE DEVIL'S MARK. HOWEVER, IT'S NOT FLASH WHO BEARS THE MARK ANYMORE, BUT ANDI, HAVING HAD IT PASSED ON TO HER WITH THE SYMBIOTE.

MANIA conclusion

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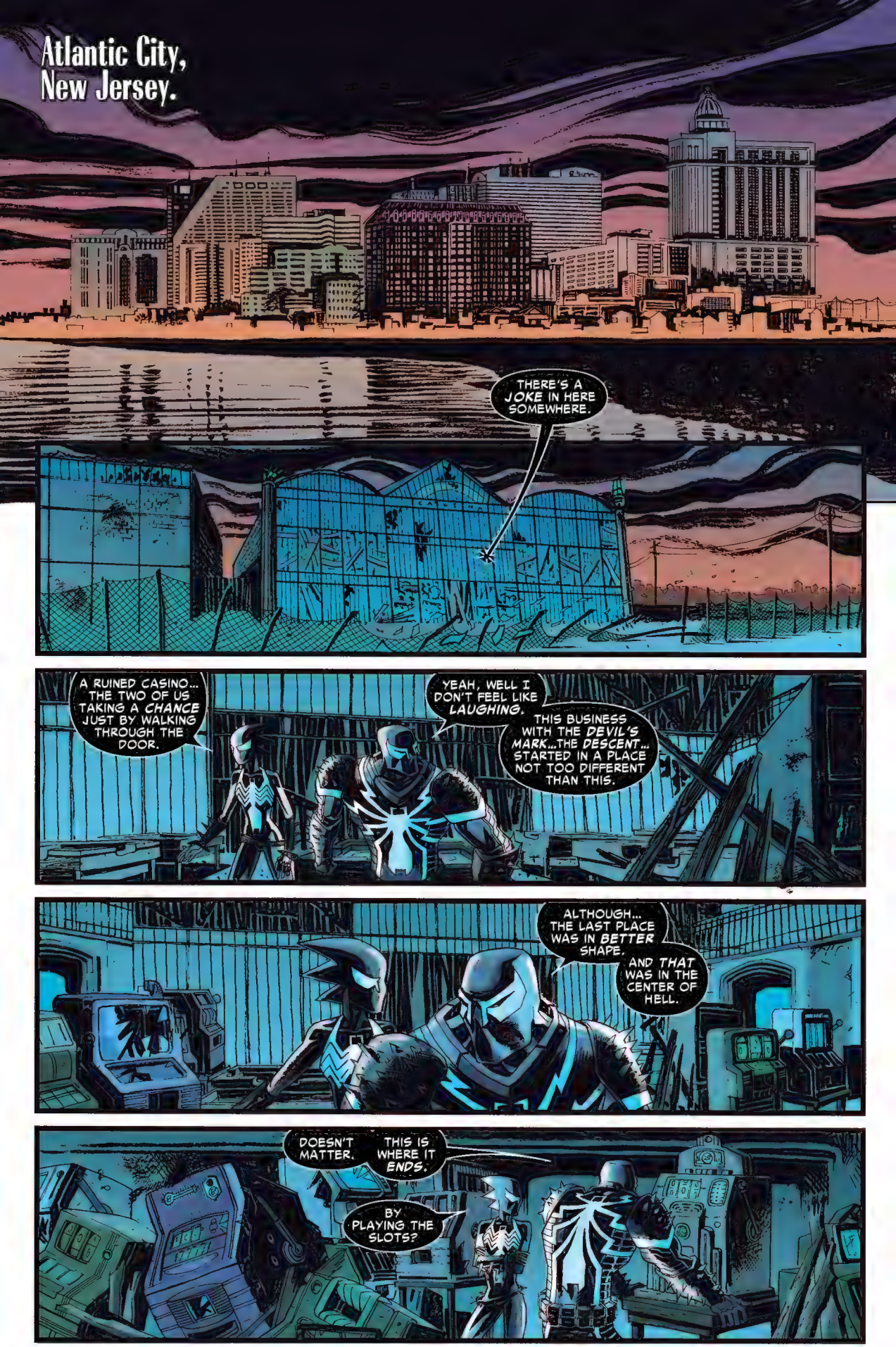
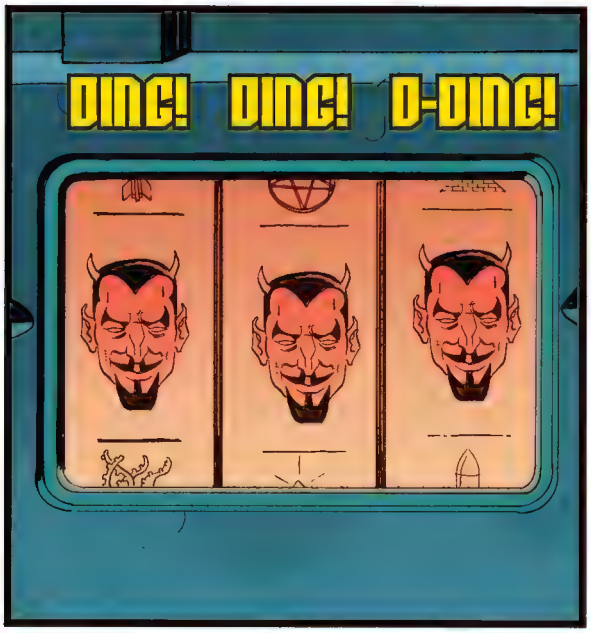

Atlantic City, New Jersey.
THERE'S A JOKE IN HERE SOMEWHERE.
A RUINED CASINO... THE TWO OF US TAKING A CHANCE JUST BY WALKING THROUGH THE DOOR.
YEAH, WELL I DON'T FEEL LIKE LAUGHING.
THIS BUSINESS WITH THE DEVIL'S MARK...THE DESCENT... STARTED IN A PLACE NOT TOO DIFFERENT THAN THIS.
ALTHOUGH... THE LAST PLACE WAS IN BETTER SHAPE.
AND THAT WAS IN THE CENTER OF HELL.
DOESN'T MATTER.
THIS IS WHERE IT ENDS.
BY PLAYING THE SLOTS?

THAT'S THE RUMOR.
THIS PLACE... DESERTED AFTER A MOB KILLING...
...THIS COIN...

...ANOINTED IN THE BLOOD OF A MAD PROPHET.

...AND A LITTLE LUCK.
ALL OF IT BAD.
YOUR INFORMANTS... THEY'RE VERY STRANGE PEOPLE.
CH-CHUNK!

WHI-RR-II-RR-II-RR-II-RR


DING! DING! D-DING!

OKAY.
NOW WHAT?

AH, MISTER THOMPSON!
YOU SIMPLY CANNOT STAY AWAY FROM DENS OF INIQUITY, CAN YOU?
YOUR TRAGIC LITTLE LIFE KEEPS DRAGGING YOU BACK TO SLEAZE-PITS LIKE THIS.
YOU'RE MY KIND OF LOSER!
JUST STAY RIGHT THERE, MEPHISTO.
NOT ANOTHER STEP.
OH, PLEASE.
YOU CAME HERE LOOKING FOR ME, DIDN'T YOU?
PUT THE WEAPONS AWAY AND LET'S CHAT LIKE CIVILIZED FOLK.
YOU'RE THE DEVIL, RIGHT?
YOU LIKE STRIKING BARGAINS...OR MAKING BLOOD OATHS...OR SEALING DEALS.
SO HERE'S A DEAL FOR YOU.
REMOVE THIS...BRAND... YOU'VE PUT ON MY SOUL...
...AND ME AND MY GYM TEACHER HERE WON'T STOMP A MUD HOLE IN YOUR SORRY CARCASS.

UH... YEAH.
WHAT SHE SAID.
HAHA HAHA HAHA HAHA HA
OH REALLY?
JUST WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DEALING WITH, LITTLE GIRL?
OKAY... EVERYBODY. STAY COOL, ALL RIGHT?
MEPHISTO... THERE'S A PROBLEM.
WITH THE DEVIL'S MARK.
"YOU BRANDED ME WITH IT BACK WHEN ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE IN VEGAS...
"...AND PICKED ME AS ONE OF YOUR POSSIBLE SUCCESSORS."
AS SEEN IN "CIRCLE OF FOUR" IN VENOM 13-14! - SYMBIOTIC SANA
"AND THERE'S THE ISSUE...BECAUSE I'M NOT MARKED ANYMORE."

THIS GIRL...
SHE BEARS THE MARK NOW.
HE CAN CALL ME MANIA.
I SEE.
IT WOULD SEEM THAT YOUR OTHERWORLDLY SYMBIOTE HAS SOME UNEXPECTED TRICKS UP ITS SLEEVE.
OR SHOULD I SAY...
...IN ITS FLESH.
"SOME TIME AGO, IT ABSORBED SOMETHING...ITS OWN CLONE.
"AND IT WOULD SEEM THAT IT WAS ABLE TO SPIT IT BACK OUT...WITH THE DEVIL'S MARK."
IT PURGED THE MARK... BUT IT HAD TO GO SOMEWHERE...
...SO IT USED THE CLONE AS A HOST.
SO... I'M JUST... SCRAPS?
I'M... A...
...COPY?
WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?
AND WHAT ABOUT THE DEMON THAT WAS TRAPPED INSIDE ME?
WHERE DID IT GO?
AND HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT MY SYMBIOTE?
I'D LOVE TO MELT YOUR PEA-SIZED BRAIN WITH ANSWERS RIGHT NOW.
I REALLY WOULD.
BUT I'M AFRAID IT WILL HAVE TO WAIT.

YOU HAVE COMPANY.
SKRRREEEEEEEAAAAAAAK!
SKKRRRRRR!
MANIA!
LOOK OUT!
SHHKKL-WHOOM!
ARE YOU--
I'M OKAY.
IT'S THOSE GUYS AGAIN, ISN'T IT?
THE D.O.A. OR WHATEVER.
BRAKKA! BRAKKA!

BRAKKA! BRAKKA! BRAKKA! BRAKKA! BRAKKA! BRAKKA!

YEAH. AND THIS TIME THEY BROUGHT REINFORCEMENTS.

BURN 'EM DOWN! LEAVE JUST ENOUGH SO WE CAN PICK THE DEVIL'S MARK FROM THE GIRL'S BONES!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

BRAKKA!

BRAKKA!

BRAKKA! BRAKKA! BRAKKA! BRAKKA!

GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF, ANDI.

THE SUIT WILL PROTECT YOU FROM MOST OF THE SMALL ARMS FIRE... HEAL YOU.

...BUT THAT HEAVY ARTILLERY CAN RIP YOU TO SHREDS.

LET'S TAKE THESE GUYS DOWN BEFORE THAT HAPPENS.

BRAKKA! BRAKKA!

BLAM!

AND WHERE THE HELL DID MEPHISTO--

ARGH!

YEEEAAGGGH!

STALKED BY FREAKS...

...WITH ASSAULT RIFLES...

...AND THEY WANT TO SKIN ME...

VIP! VIP! V-VIP!

THIS IS WHY I TRY TO STAY THE HELL OUT OF ATLANTIC CITY!

KRNK!

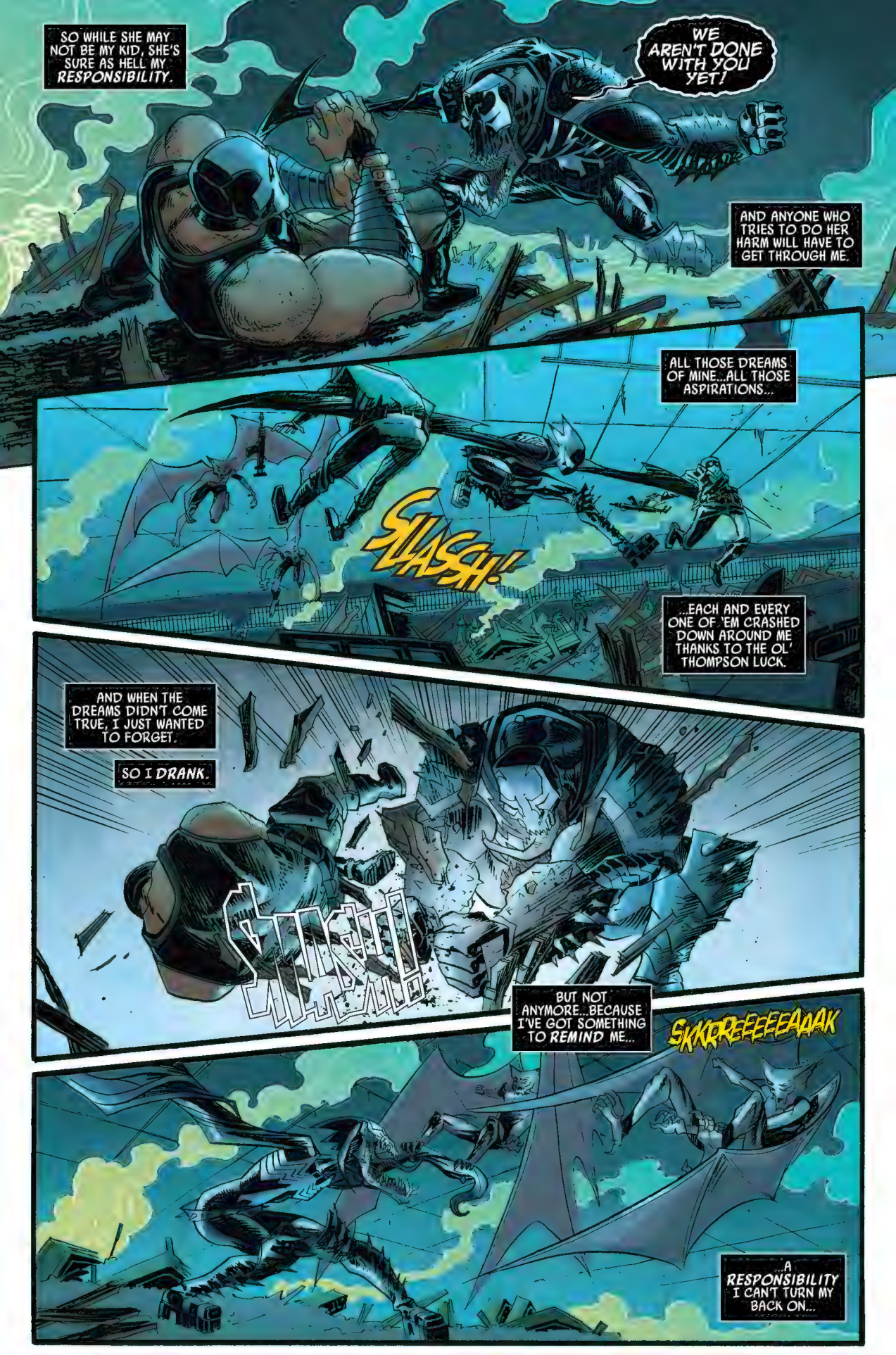
KRAK!

SNAP!

RRRUMMMBLLEEE
SHHRR-RAK!
SHRAK! KR-RAK!
GET BACK UP!
ARE YOU GONNA LET A LITTLE GIRL WHOOP YOUR ASSES?
WHY NOT?
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
I'M GIVING YOU YOUR SHOT.

WOOF!
AS A KID, I WANTED TO BE AN ALL-STAR.
I WANTED THE FANS, THE RING, AND THE STRING OF ATHLETIC SHOE AND BREAKFAST FOOD ENDORSEMENTS.
AS I GOT OLDER, I DREAMED OF FOLLOWING IN MY IDOL'S FOOTSTEPS...
...BECOMING AN HONEST-TO-GOODNESS SUPER HERO...
...EVEN THOUGH I'VE NEVER REALLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT THAT MEANT.
AND IF I COULDN'T BE A SUPER HERO, I JUST WANTED TO SERVE MY COUNTRY.
THE ONE THING I NEVER WANTED TO BE, THOUGH, WAS A FATHER.
MY OLD MAN CURED ME OF ANY PARENTAL ASPIRATIONS EARLY ON.
SLLSSSK!

WHEN HE GOT SO DRUNK HE PUKED ALL OVER MY COMIC BOOKS...
...WHEN HE WENT CATTING AROUND 'TIL ALL HOURS OF THE NIGHT...
RRRRGGHH
...WHEN HE HIT ME...
...I KNEW IT WAS WRONG...I KNEW THAT WASN'T HOW A DAD WAS SUPPOSED TO ACT...
...AND I KNEW I NEVER WANTED TO RISK BECOMING ANYTHING LIKE HIM.
GRARRGH!
CHHNK!
NNNGGH
BACK-STABBING SONOVA--
ANDI TOLD ME I SHOULD STOP TRYING TO ACT LIKE HER FATHER.
AND SHE'S RIGHT.
CROSSBONES.
HER FATHER DIED... BECAUSE OF ME...ON THE SAME NIGHT SHE BECAME MANIA...
...ALSO BECAUSE OF ME.
DON'T GO ANYWHERE.


SO WHILE SHE MAY NOT BE MY KID, SHE'S SURE AS HELL MY RESPONSIBILITY.
WE AREN'T DONE WITH YOU YET!
AND ANYONE WHO TRIES TO DO HER HARM WILL HAVE TO GET THROUGH ME.
ALL THOSE DREAMS OF MINE...ALL THOSE ASPIRATIONS...
SLLASSH!
...EACH AND EVERY ONE OF 'EM CRASHED DOWN AROUND ME THANKS TO THE OL' THOMPSON LUCK.
AND WHEN THE DREAMS DIDN'T COME TRUE, I JUST WANTED TO FORGET.
SO I DRANK.
BUT NOT ANYMORE...BECAUSE I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO REMIND ME...
SKKRREEEEEAAAK
...A RESPONSIBILITY I CAN'T TURN MY BACK ON...

...AND THAT MEANS FIGHTING...
...'TIL YOUR KNUCKLES ARE RAW AND THE ONLY THING YOU CAN TASTE IS YOUR OWN SWEAT AND BLOOD...
DON'T JUST STAND THERE, YA SORRY SACK!
YER SUPPOSED TO BE OUR MAGICAL BACKUP!
I DON'T HEAR SOME ABRACADABRAS COMING OUTTA YER PIE HOLE--
--AND I MEAN RIGHT THIS @#$%$# SECOND--
--I'M GONNA FEED YOU TO THOSE THINGS.
B-BUT...MY DEMONS...
THEY... THEY TURNED ON ME.
TRAGIC, ISN'T IT?
WHEN YOUR UNDERLINGS BETRAY YOU.
WHU--

MEPHISTO!
MY...MY LORD.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
IF I HAD KNOWN...I WOULD HAVE BROUGHT AN OFFERING.
PLEASE, SPARE ME YOUR PLATITUDES.
YOU'RE ONE OF THE ENTROPY CELL, AREN'T YOU? PANDEMONIUM'S DISCIPLE, MASTER MAYHEM..
SUCH A GRAND EXPERIMENT, YOU AND YOUR KIND.
AND THAT'S WHY IT IS SO DISAPPOINTING TO SEE YOU MUCKING AROUND WITH MY PLANS.
TRYING TO HARVEST DEVIL'S MARKS FROM MY CHOSEN.
TSK
BAD BOY.
NNNRRRREAAAACCCH!
ALTHOUGH YOU'LL STILL PROVE USEFUL TO ME.
KR-KRAK-SNAP!

RISE...
...MONSTERS OF EVIL!

WE... WE KNOW THEM.
HELLSTROM CREATED THEM...DEMONS POSSESSING MONSTERS.
WARNED THEM NEVER TO SHOW THEMSELVES AGAIN.
OF COURSE YOU DID.
ONLY, THE POWER THAT GAVE YOU INFLUENCE OVER THEM IS GONE.
THEY NEED NOT HEED YOUR WORDS.
NOW...
...THEY ARE MANIA'S TO COMMAND.
GRRAAAHHH!
SHHRRRRRKK!
M-MINE?
ALL RIGHT THEN.
TEAR 'EM APART!

ARE YOU DONE?
DO YOU SURRENDER?
OR DOES THIS GET MESSIER?

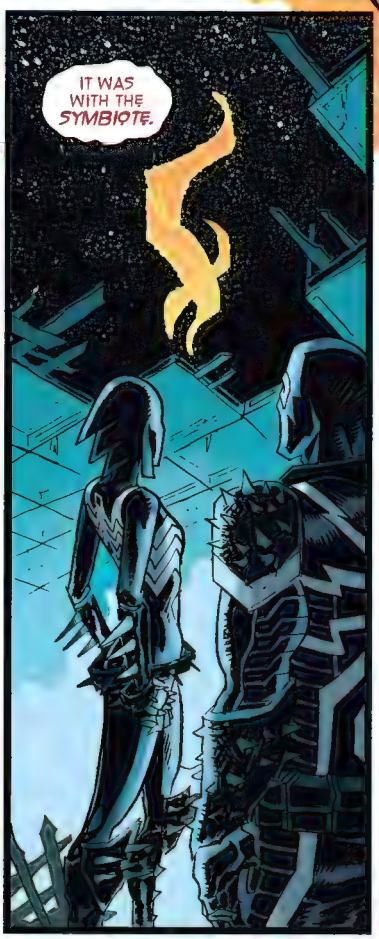
THE PEOPLE I WORK WITH...
...THEY WON'T EVER BE DONE...
...NOT UNTIL THEY'VE GOT WHAT THEY WANT.
NEXT TIME, IT'LL BE--
YOU BETTER RUN!
STOP DOING THAT.
THOSE NAZI GUYS...THE DEMONS...THE MONSTERS.
ALL OF THEM.
THEY'RE GONE.
YOU HAVE ME TO THANK FOR THAT.
I SENT THE MONSTERS OF EVIL HOME.
AND THE OTHERS... WELL...
...CONSIDER THEM A SNACK FOR THE TRIP.
ALL RIGHT.
LET'S GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS.
RELEASE HER. LET ANDI GO.
ERASE THE MARK... WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO DO...
BUT DO IT-- NOW.
AND IF I SAY NO?

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

THAT WASN'T SMART, FLASH, DEAR BOY.
SUCH AN INSULT...I SHOULD FILET YOU WHERE YOU STAND.
BUT IT WOULD SEEM THAT WE HAVE MUTUAL ENEMIES...AND THEY HAVE DESIGNS ON DEAR MANIA HERE.
SHE NEEDS YOU... AND SO, TOO, DO I.
I SPARE YOU ONLY SO YOU CAN CONTINUE TO ACT AS HER GUARDIAN.

WAIT. HOLD ON.
WHAT ABOUT THE DEMON VENOM MENTIONED? THE ONE THAT WAS TRAPPED INSIDE HIM?
IS IT IN ME NOW?
AND HOW CAN I BE MARKED IF I NEVER MADE ANY DEAL WITH YOU?

SO MANY QUESTIONS.
BUT I'M AFRAID YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY BLEEDING HEART ON MY SCHEDULE.
I'LL LEAVE YOU WITH THIS, THOUGH.
MY ORIGINAL BARGAIN...THE ONE THAT MARKED VENOM...WAS NOT WITH FLASH.


IT WAS WITH THE SYMBIOTE.

ARE... ARE YOU OKAY?
I... I DON'T KNOW.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT... HOW...I'M SUPPOSED TO FEEL.
HEY...WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS.
WE'VE GOT RESOURCES. I HAVE FRIENDS WHO CAN HELP US.
I'M NOT GONNA STOP UNTIL I FIND A WAY TO REMOVE THAT MARK.
I SWEAR--
SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO FIGHT.
UNTIL YOUR KNUCKLES ARE RAW.
BUT SOMETIMES IT'S JUST AS IMPORTANT TO LET YOUR GUARD DOWN.
AND JUST BE THERE.
AN ALL-STAR, A HERO, A SOLDIER.
ALL THE THINGS I DREAMED OF BEING.
AND STILL SURPRISED... EVEN AT THE END...WITH HOW MY LIFE TURNED OUT.

SYMBIWROTE

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Since his introduction in The Amazing Spider-Man #299 from April 1988, Venom has been a one of Spider-Man's most recognizable and popular villains. After 25 years, the symbiotic psycho has come a long way, and has a new life all his own in Philadelphia. From his new nemesis, Jack O' Lantern, to the latest symbiote to join Marvel U, Mania, Venom's family is continuing to grow – and that includes you readers, too! So, after the longest solo-running Venom series yet, here're your letters!

I'm very disappointed to hear of Venom's cancellation. It is the book I look forward to the most every month. Flash is my favorite Spider-lad, he is easy to relate to. I can't relate to SpOck or Kaine as easily as I could to Flash. He is a hero for all those who came from broken homes and manages to overcome it. I found Agent Venom pretty inspiring in that way. I really wish I could continue seeing him as the star of a series.

One Sad Venom Fan
Rachel Collier

Symbiwrote,

This last hurrah of the current Venom series has been very impressive. I have been enjoying the adventures of Flash and my favorite symbiote, and if the series has to end I am glad that it is ending on a great note. (Although I am hoping and praying that the end of this series somehow sees the Venom symbiote end up back with Brock. I long for more stories circa the Lethal Protector days.)

Issue 41 had some great dialogue that you really deserve kudos on. The reaction to Venom tossing the bomb into the wizard's demon portal/cloak was laugh out loud funny. Even better was the "conversation" between Flash and the symbiote. That was chilling and definitely made me feel for the symbiote. It was fantastic to see it FINALLY get some personality; to see it comment on how it has been treated over the course of this series.

Thank you for a great Marvel Comic. Please keep up the good work wherever you guys end up next.

Ross Griswold
Des Moines, Iowa

I just wanted to drop a very quick note to say how much I have enjoyed this series of VENOM, I've been with it since issue #1 (from Rick Remender) and I was a little concerned when Cullen Bunn took over but he has not let me down and, if anything he has actually *improved* on the work started by Mr. Remender.

If you had told me 5 years ago that I would of like a VENOM series at all (nevermind one which does not even have Eddie Brock as the host of the symbiote) I would of called you mad but it has happened.

I am very sorry to see this cancelled but I hope to see a relaunch in MARVEL NOW PHASE 2.

I am aware that Flash appears in THUNDERBOLTS but I am not a fan of that series (I was, of the original series, but not since the relaunch...) and I hope I will be able to enjoy Flash as Venom in some other title on a monthly basis (I am not counting his up-coming guest stint in SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN).

I also hope that Mania can find a home as I feel Mr Bunn has created an interesting character.

Really, all I can say now is thank you to Mr. Bunn and Mr. Remender before him and I hope to see more work from you soon, hopefully in a relaunch!

I also hope Mania can find a home and does not wind up in limbo (assuming, of course, that she survives her debut arc!)

James Hunter
England

I was totally bummed to hear that Venom is ending! This run is one that far, far exceeded my expectations. I was honestly never a huge fan of Venom, and yet with Flash under the mask, it quickly became one of my favorite ongoing books. As I look back on the last 40 issues, I honestly don't remember a lot of the action, but I do very much remember Flash's troubles. The alcoholism, depression, Betty, his father, being lonely in a new city...things most of us have had similar experiences to.

Marvel's books are best when they remember that these characters really aren't much different than any of us (if you ignore the fact that they're super-powered masked adventurers). I hope to see more Flash Thompson soon.

David Massimini
Columbus, OH

Dear Marvel,

Venom has always been a series I've played catch-up with. I waited til about the 15th issue before realizing how well-written it was, and as such spent a great deal of time tracking down issues.

I had it on standing order until Minimum Carnage, which I didn't enjoy; hence I dropped the book.

I picked up #40 based purely on the cover alone. "Who is this Mania character?" I wondered.

I was impressed with the story, but not with the news the book is ending with #42.

I know Flash/Venom will continue on with Thunderbolts but I hope this isn't the last time we see Mania.

All the best,
Maarten Bouw
Melbourne Australia.

Andi is my favorite new character to come out of Marvel in years.

Mania is an inspired interpretation of the symbiote concept and I am hard pressed to think of a time when i have been more excited to read the adventures of a teen hero. Between that and the Venom-Mobile I can't imagine how much better this is going to get! Please don't let Andi get killed off quickly like so many teen heroes these days. Is she gonna keep the Pipe Wrench as a signature?

Everett Christensen

Good morning Spider-People!

Just wanted to add my voice to the folks who are crushed to be losing Venom as a solo title. It's the series that first got me started in comics and how I fell in love with Marvel as a (now) thirty year old woman! I've loved reading about Flash's struggle to be a hero and his enemy Jack O'Lantern is the most terrifying Marvel villain I've ever seen. I'm devastated that his story is going to end on a cliffhanger and we might never know what happens between Flash and dear ol' Jack. I hope Flash/Agent Venom continues to be a visible character across the Marvel U and I'd love to see a restart of his solo series (with Jack in tow!) at some point in the future. :)

Margaret M.

First off let me declare this ..THIS BOOK IS INCREDIBLE! I've been reading Venom since I found my uncle's "Lethal Protector" series in the 90's and, oh, man... I've always loved the struggle between good guy and bad guy -- help Spidey, or crush him? I love how the symbiote affects the people who wear it and I am definitely team FLASH THOMPSON . I've been on this since Issue 1 and not once have I been disappointed -- not once. In the originals, I loved how Venom spawned and made the other symbiotes (Carnage, Riot, Scream, Agony, Lasher, and Purge) and I said, O.M.G. Then, you hit me with Hybrid and Toxin then I got Poison and Anti-Venom and now you folks hit me with Andi's spawn.

I just love the Venom character and story and the constant evolution. Thank you, Marvel and you folks attached to this amazing book I will keep reading so keep printing

Venomously yours
Jay Velasquez

P.S. I love the different artist touching this book all the time. Please, please get JOE MAD! He is so my favorite right now -- his stuff blows my brain!

Marvel,

Flash Thompson as Agent Venom is one of my favorite ongoings. When I heard he was being canceled, I was disappointed.

I would really like if you were to change your mind about canceling the series, relaunch the series keeping Flash as the host for Venom, or keep him on the Thunderbolts.

Mania is by far the coolest side kick I've ever seen. I would enjoy seeing Andi and Flash having adventures together.

Nate Lewis

I have to say...Venom is one of my all time favorite titles right now. I just heard the news that it's ending in October and I'm SO MAD!!! Anyway, I'm really sorry to see you guys go, and since this title is ending, I figured I didn't want to procrastinate any longer on telling you how much I love the series. Both the writing and artwork are spot on. You've definitely made me a big fan of Flash!

Tom Chapman

P.S. Here's some of my own artwork as a token of my gratitude...

SymbiWrote

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As I sit down to write this... my sad farewell to VENOM... I think back on the day I got the call asking me to take over the series. Even before I got off the phone, I was formulating detailed plans and a long overarching story that would cover a lot of ground—an evolving story that would span several years.

I might have been dreaming too big, but that's the curse of someone who loves these characters and concepts as much as I do. Much of the story I envisioned will likely never be fully revealed. Some story elements changed, some were delayed, some got lost in the shuffle, and some were revealed as planned.

In the end, though, readers may never know what I had in mind for the Descent, for Toxin and Mania, for the emergence of an all new Anti-Venom (an idea Declan Shalvey and I geeked out over quite a bit), for the 'war for the symbiote', for Venom's rise to the preeminent hero in Philly, or for the inevitable return of Crime-Master.

Suffice it to say, it would have been a wild ride.

Would I have changed things if I had the chance to do it over? Maybe, but not necessarily. I might have been overzealous or over ambitious. I might have tried to tie together too many existing plot threads. In the end, though, I'm proud of the work I did. And I'm thankful for what I was able to do with the 28 issues I wrote or co-wrote (counting Minimum Carnage and .1 issues).

Twenty-eight issues! The series ran 42+ issues! That's nothing to sneeze at when you consider that this is a book many readers said would never make it past the sixth issue.

Before I sign off, I wanted to take a moment to thank all the fans of the book. I've said it before, but I was a little surprised by how many hardcore symbiote fans there are out there. Your enthusiasm for these characters is delightful and infectious. I also want to thank Rick Remender, Steve Wacker, Tom Brennan, Sana Amanat, and all the artistic folks I worked with over the course of the series. I could fill another 27 issues with all the reasons that you all rock so hard.

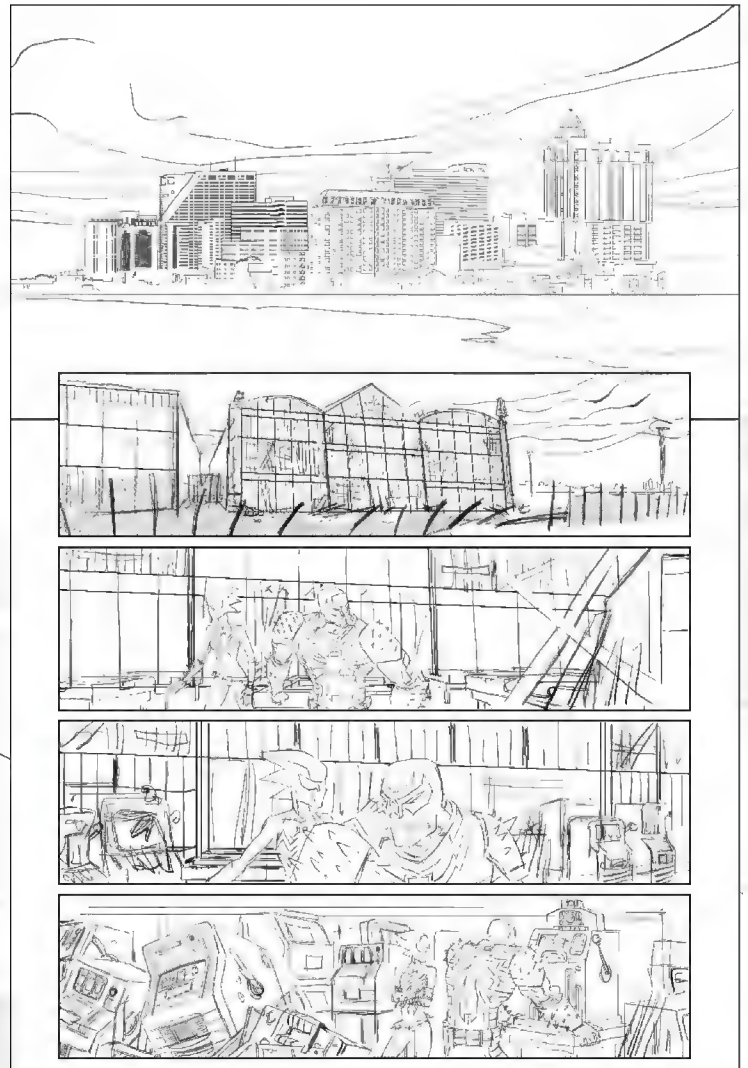
And don't be too sad for the end of the series, symbiote fans! The great thing about the Marvel Universe is that the show goes on even after the end of a series. I know some of the plans that are in store for Venom, and it's pretty exciting stuff! And while I'm not writing Venom any more, I'm not quite done with symbiotes. Stay tuned.

-Cullen Bunn

VENOM WILL RETURN in SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #22

#37 COVER INKS by Declan Shalvey

#42 PAGE 1
PENCILS AND INKS
by Jorge Coelho



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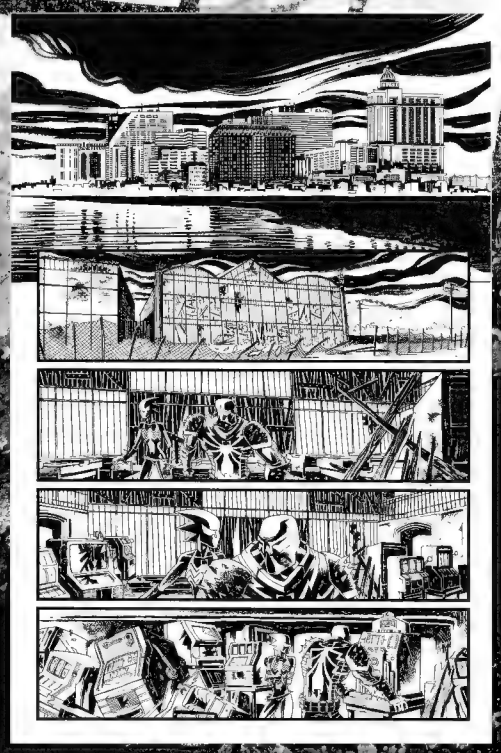

#42 PAGE 3
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#42 PAGE 4
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#42 PAGE 5
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#42 PAGE 6
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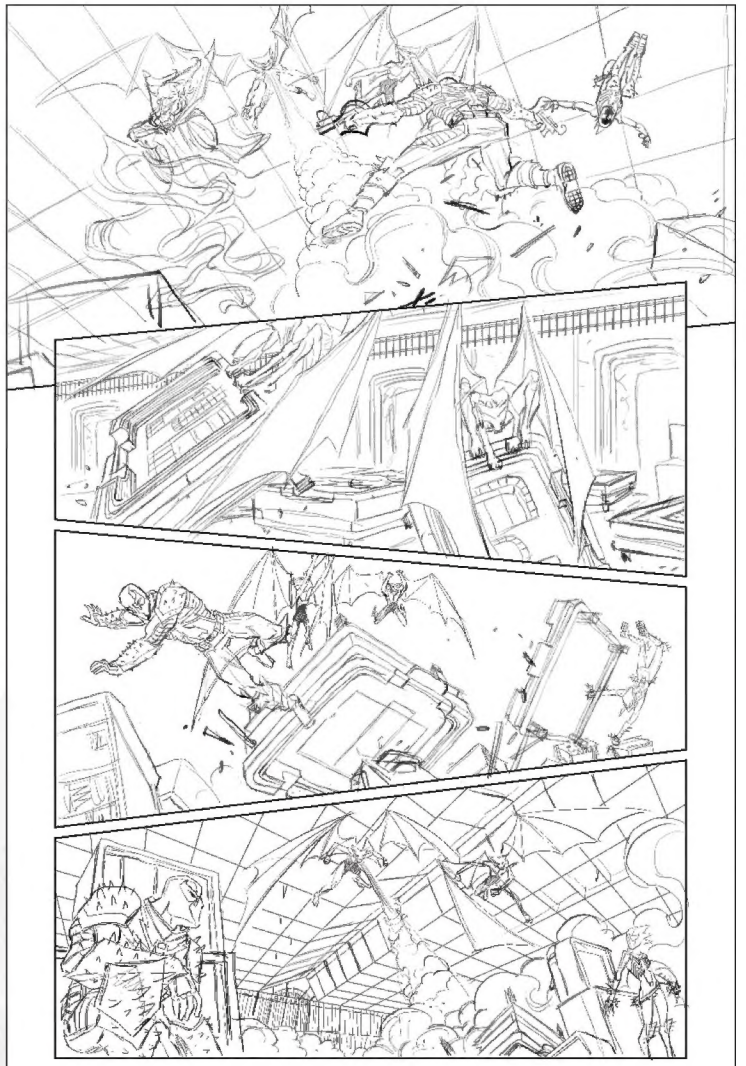

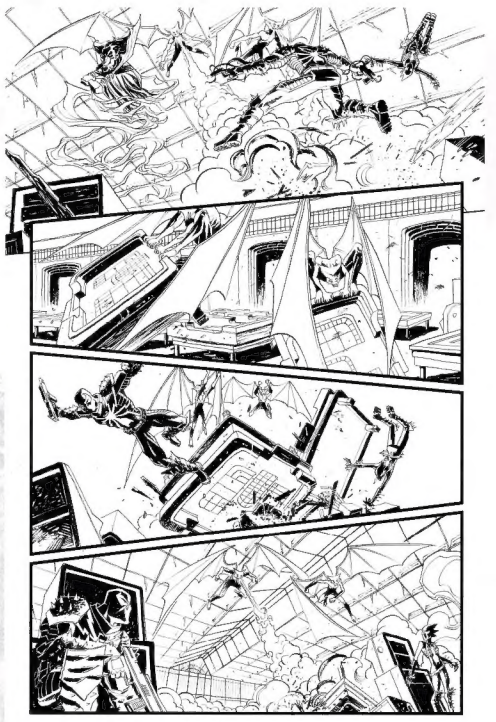

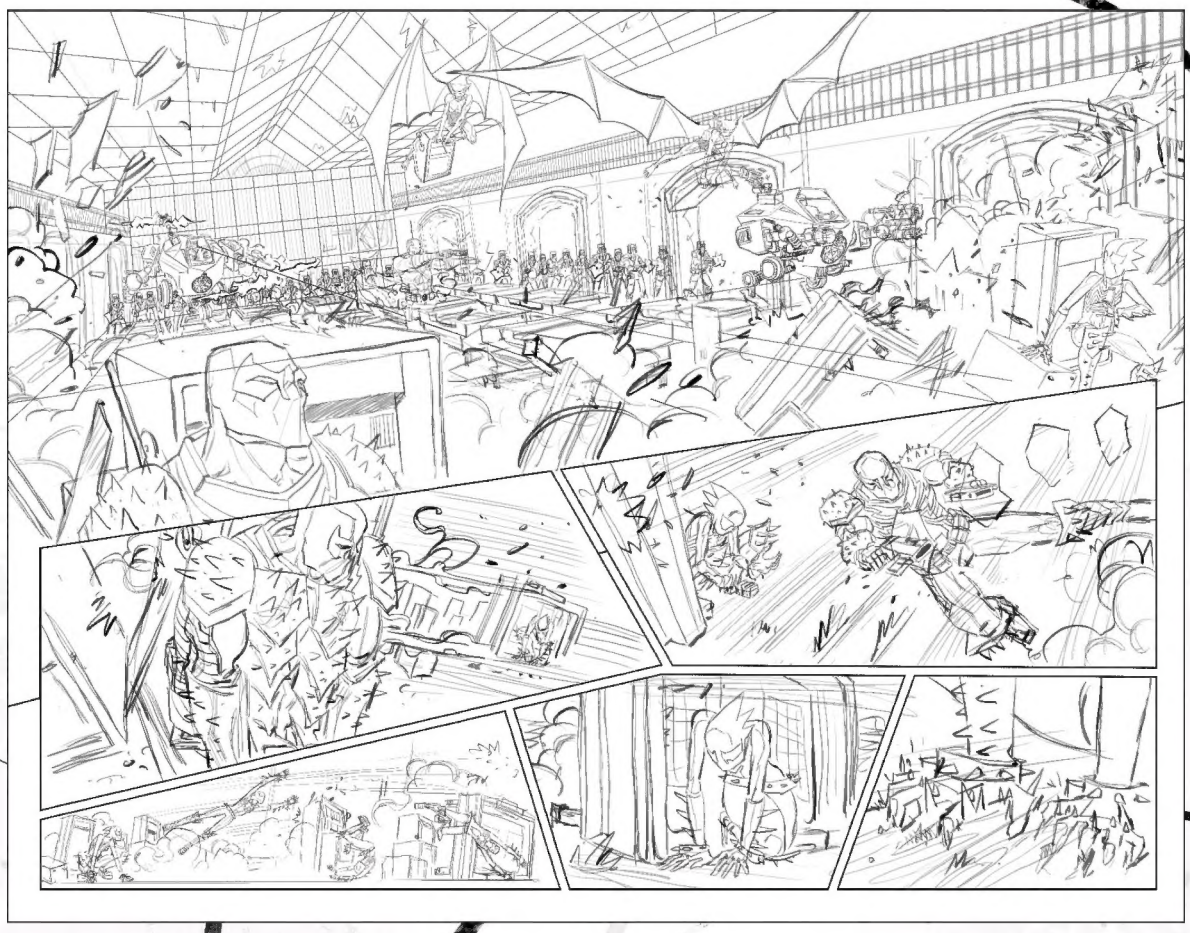

#42 PAGES 7 & 8
PENCILS AND INKS
by Jorge Coelho

PHILADELPHIA FINALLY GETS THE HERO IT NEVER WANTED!

Agent Venom hits the town for some good, old-fashioned crime-busting — but crime busts back when Lord Ogre, leader of Philadelphia's underworld, declares war on the city's would-be hero! Cold-blooded killers crawl out of the woodwork to collect on the contract put out for Venom's head — and when his secret identity is discovered, Flash Thompson needs all the help he can find just to survive. To complicate matters, a new symbiote-powered entity joins the fray when Flash's heroics lead to the inadvertent birth of Mania! But can this new danger be wrangled, and is she friend or foe?

Collecting *Venom #27.1* and *#36-42*.

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